LOUIS NAPOLEON, PRINCE IMPERIAL.

SALVAGE FROM THE WRECK

A Few Memories of Friends Departed Preserved in Funeral Discourses

By FATHER GALLWEY, S.J.

New Edition, Enlarged

LONDON: ART AND BOOK COMPANY
22 PATERNOSTER ROW M.DCCCC.III

61157

Nihil obstat:

JOANNES RICKABY, S.J.,
Censor Deputatus.

Imprimatur:

HERBERTUS,
Card. Archiepūs Westmonast.

Die 6° Aprilis, 1902

252
G18
377

CONTENTS

		PAGE
I	Sir Charles Tempest	1
II	Hon. Charles Langdale, S.J.	18
	Appendix I.—Sir Edward Vavasour and the Good Lady Stourton	57
III	George W. Cuninghame	94
	Appendix II.—Margaret Mary Cuninghame ...	109
IV	Cecil Marchioness of Lothian	122
V	Prince Louis Napoleon...	157
VI	Marcia Lady Herries	178
VII	Mother Magdalen, O.S.F.	209
VIII	Lady Georgiana Fullerton	220
IX	Charles Weld	247
	Appendix III.—Charles Weld	269
X	William Joseph Middelton	283
XI	Robert Caddell	305
XII	Eliza Mary Katharine Devas	320
	Appendix IV	340
XIII	Joseph Weld	343
	Appendix V.—Thomas Weld, of Lulworth, and Mary Weld, his daughter, in Religion Mother Mary de Sales	366
XIV	Mrs Theodore Galton	381
	Centenary Sermon preached at Stonyhurst, July 25, 1894	399
	Centenary Sermon preached at the Convent of the Holy Sepulchre, New Hall, July 5, 1898 ...	416

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/salvagefromwreck0000fath

NOTE TO THE PRESENT EDITION

To this the second edition of SALVAGE FROM THE WRECK have been added the discourse delivered at the funeral of Mrs Theodore Galton and the sermons preached at the centenaries of Stonyhurst and New Hall.

March, 1903.

INTRODUCTION

WE read that in the early days of persecution a holy pope appointed deacons to different portions of the Eternal City to take note of the sayings and doings and sufferings of the blessed martyrs. It was "a holy and wholesome thought."* For what sermons work more good than the Life of Christ and the lives of His saints? Examples preach more persuasively than arguments; and if examples of virtue are preserved in annals or biographies, they still retain a large part of their persuasive power; and thus the written Life of a holy person becomes a very useful apostle.

Two advantages attach to this apostleship of books: first, that when zealous men and women die, the book lives on to do its work; and if it grow old, by publishing a new edition its "youth can be renewed like the eagle's."† Then, secondly, a good book can often find its way into quarters where priests and nuns cannot set their foot, and where no living Catholic is admitted.

This being so, it is, as I have said, always "a holy and wholesome thought" to chronicle the good deeds and words of those we live with, that the good seed may not be wasted. For every edifying act or word is a seed which can bear fruit in many souls where the soil is good.

We hear many say: "I have not met with

* 2 Macc. xii. † Psalm cii.

anything worth recording"; but this, I think, must be a mistake. The redemption of Christ is plentiful, as the twenty-ninth psalm tells us. The divine Sower goes out to sow His seed everywhere and at all times. Who is there, the psalmist asks, that can escape from the warmth of those bright rays which come from the burning Heart of the Bridegroom who has set His tabernacle in the sun, and who hath "rejoiced as a giant to run his way,"* in order to accomplish His work of saving souls? As the Church of Christ is both a garden and a vineyard, it is hard to live anywhere within it without seeing round about us flowers fair to the eye and fragrant, and fruits sweet to the taste; and the holiness of the uncanonized and the virtues of everyday life, if recorded, have this advantage, that they seem to be more within the reach of our imitation.

Certain periods, however, in the Church's history abound more than others in holy examples and edifying histories. The last half-century of the Catholic Church in this country has been one of these privileged periods. It is about fifty years since Father Ignatius (the Hon. and Rev. Father Spencer) and the late Cardinal Wiseman began to solicit prayers for the conversion of England, and succeeded in arousing so much sympathy for the good cause, both at home and on the Continent. Almost simultaneously with the beginning of this crusade of prayer was the commencement of that religious revolution in the Protestant Church of England, since so well known as the Oxford Movement. Oxford deserves to give its name to that great conversion of hearts towards the Catholic Church,

* Ps. xviii.

because in those days of persecution and mad revolution which, at the close of the last century, drove the French priests by thousands to seek refuge in this country, Oxford was prominent in that spirit of hospitality and charity which welcomed those exiles. A very large number of the Protestant nobility and gentry harboured these homeless priests in the hour of their extreme need, and many Protestant families have since no doubt been helped by the prayers of those grateful *émigrés* to find their way out of darkness into "the admirable light."* The University of Oxford on that occasion gave to the French clergy an alms that was singularly welcome and well chosen. At its own expense it printed a special edition of the New Testament according to the Latin Vulgate, and furnished every banished priest with a copy to solace the days of suffering. What wonder that such an excellent alms should draw down a magnificent reward! The Good Thief gave an alms to our Lord in His hour of need. While others hooted, he had the courage to say in the face of the Scribes and Pharisees: "This man hath done no evil." His recompense was not slow in coming; and how great it was, "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into man's heart to conceive."†

The outcome, then, of the Oxford Movement and the multiplied prayers for England have been a period of exceptional blessing for the Catholic Church in England. Again and again, therefore, I asked the late Lady Georgiana Fullerton, who was so fitted for the task, to write some memoirs of the edifying scenes in which she had so often taken a prominent part. I often

* St Peter ii. † 1 Cor. ii.

also tried to move that kind and genial and venerable old man, the late Bishop of Troy, to leave behind him in writing, for the good of others, some of his valuable reminiscences; for his memory went back to another period of great interest, the days when the great Doctor Milner was fighting the battle of Orthodoxy in this country. Unfortunately in both instances I failed to obtain what I wished. Lady Georgiana Fullerton had indeed set her hand to the work, but before many chapters were written she was called away to her reward. We may, however, still live in hopes that the task she had set herself will be accomplished by another hand not less fitted than her own for his holy and important work.

Meanwhile, it was Lady Georgiana Fullerton, who so well knew the value of edifying examples, who first asked me, when she was now near her death, to republish the funeral sermons in which I had tried to rescue from oblivion a few gleanings at least out of the vast harvest of edifying details produced during the last forty years. Her request was afterwards backed by one who deserves to be listened to on such a subject, on account of his successful labours in promoting the apostleship of good books. I allude to Father Henry Coleridge, S.J., whom we may well put alongside the late Father Faber of the Oratory, and say that they have been pre-eminent in this divine work. A third friend, Father Russell, S.J., who in Ireland labours indefatigably in the same pious mission of multiplying good books, urged on me the same advice. Deferring, then, to their wish, and acting on their advice I have gathered together the scattered fragments to make this volume. All

the while, however, I say with regret to myself, as I look at the very few details it contains, "what are these out of so many" that are in danger of being forgotten and lost? Lost, I mean, to us here on earth, for not one escapes the vigilant eye of those angels whom God employs to record every cup of cold water given for His sake. What a surprise, what an overwhelming gladness it will be at the Judgement to find that the loving and most compassionate eye of our Judge has found countless flowers and fruit, when we ourselves imagined there was nothing but brambles and poisonous weeds!

How easy it would be to fill volumes with touching and consoling incidents gathered out of these last forty years of grace and conversion! Who is there that could not pour in some precious contribution?

I remember, for instance, a young officer who died about six months after he had been received into the Church; and as he was dying he blamed himself for having indulged his palate too much during life, and thereupon, in the spirit of penance, from Sunday morning until the hour of his death on Monday evening, he refused to drink even a drop of water. "I wish," he said, "to die thirsty like our Lord."

Again, I remember how at a mission preached by the Redemptorist fathers several women of bad life were brought back to God. As soon as this was made known, a lady, who was a true friend to the poor and needy, went from her own house, which was eight or ten miles off, to the scene of the mission, to see if she could do anything to help these prodigals to persevere. Among them she found one who, because she belonged to a respectable family, was par-

ticularly sensitive to her fallen position in the eyes of the world. To this one this charitable lady especially devoted her care. She took her to her house and gave orders to her servants that to this woman they were never to say, "Not at home." She continued thus to watch over her with a motherly heart till she found her a good situation in a factory in Lancashire. In the factory she won by her good conduct the esteem of those among whom she moved to such an extent that in the end the son of the owner of the factory married her, and their wedding-trip was a journey to express their gratitude to the good lady who had been kind to her in her critical hour of need.

Countless other incidents of interest I pass by, to dwell more at length on one story worthy, I think, to be remembered.

It was on the first of the new year, in January, 1864, that, after an early dinner, we were sitting together in the house in Hill Street, then occupied by the Jesuit fathers, when a note was delivered to me which was intended for Father William Eyre, but in his absence was to be opened by me. This note was written by the Countess of B——, then not long received into the Church, and enclosed another written to her which was to this effect: "Can you find some satisfactory Roman priest to come to my father, who is dying?" I lost no time, and was soon at the door of a fine house in Great Stanhope Street. There I was met by a pale-faced young man of very pleasing countenance, who, with great courtesy, said to me: "I beg your pardon, sir, but I hope you will not take for granted that my father wishes to join the Roman Church. He wishes to see a Catholic priest, but it is not at all

certain that he wishes to take any further step." These words disturbed me not a little; for it so happened that shortly before an elderly lady had made a general confession to me of her whole life, and at the end of her confession said: "Perhaps you are not aware, Reverend Father, that I do not desire to join your communion; I only wish to have absolution and remain in the Church of England." My answer was: "I wish very much you had told me this a little sooner; we should both have been spared the labour of this general confession." I explained to her that absolution could not be given under such circumstances; that she could not have a Roman Catholic priest to absolve and an Anglican clergyman to give her Communion. So we parted; and shortly after I heard of her sudden death. With this instance fresh in my mind I was troubled when I heard that a dying man wanted to see me, but did not, perhaps, wish to join the Catholic Church. I went upstairs, therefore, in a state of disquiet to the room of the dying man. On my way I found in an ante-room outside the sick-room three other grown-up sons, two of whom I afterwards found were in the Guards, and I was struck by the fact that they all had their shoes off, for fear lest they might disturb their father. Along with them was their mother, who, with sadness and anxiety on her face, was sitting by the fire. In addition to these was a grown-up daughter, who was evidently the chief nurse, and was going in and out of the sick-room.

When I entered the room I found lying on the bed an elderly gentleman, whose appearance was to my eye that of a military man, but in that I was mistaken. His first word to me as I

entered, spoken in a firm and decided tone, was: "Sir, you have no time to lose." As, however, I had been warned downstairs, I did not feel inclined to move too fast. I had not indeed any wish to lose time, but rather was anxious to gain time in order to be sure of my ground. I therefore began to ascertain, with all kindness, but at the same time with a firm resolve to do my work effectually, whether the dying man was sufficiently instructed in Catholic doctrines, and properly disposed for admission into the Church. To my surprise all his answers to my questions were quite satisfactory. I went carefully through the substance of the Creed of Pope Pius IV, and found that in all necessary points he was very thoroughly instructed. Again and again I put in different forms the question to him: "Do you really wish to be a Roman Catholic?" His answer was in substance always to this effect: "Of course I do, otherwise I would not have sent for you." Then, to make more sure, I put what I thought would be the crucial question: "Are you aware that you will have to make a confession?" "I am quite prepared," was the answer. And, in fact, I found that he was as well prepared for confession as if he had been for years in the Church. Gradually my fears were cleared away, and I made up my mind that the warning given me at the door was simply the expression of filial solicitude of a very good son, lest his father should be hurried too fast into taking a step of such great importance. I afterwards found out that Mr C—— (the dying gentleman who had sent for me) had for several years, by reading, been instructing himself in the Catholic religion, and earning the grace of conversion by being particularly kind to the poor

Irish who were going about in quest of labour in the part of Scotland where his property lay. His servants had orders that food and a night's refuge should always be provided for them. Being then at last quite satisfied that he was very well prepared, I heard his confession, and after that, as he was in a very weak state, went away in order to allow him some time to rest. On my return I gave him Viaticum and Extreme Unction.

He lived, after receiving these holy Sacraments, five days. During those days, to make assurance doubly sure, I asked him from time to time whether he was glad at what he had done, and whether he wished that his children should follow his example. He always answered that he was most thankful that God gave him the grace to die a Catholic, and that he very much wished that his children might have the same grace. During the few days of life that remained, two things made an impression on me. First, the dutiful and affectionate attention of the four grown-up sons to both their parents, Pater and Mater, as they called them. Though none of them were at that time Catholics, nothing could exceed their solicitude that their father should have all the helps which his new religion could give him. Of their own accord they used to come to summon me, sometimes in the middle of the night, when they thought that some spiritual help would be useful. One day it chanced that, after baptizing the child of a friend, I went to dine with the family in commemoration of the event. Just as we were sitting down to dinner, one of the young Guardsmen, who had found out where I was, came for me, and I remember well the words he said, which

were so true and so wise: "You can dine with your friends any day, but now my father wants you." Later on this son said to me: "Some day you will have me also, but not yet." He was evidently much struck by his father's death-bed, but naturally was making a fight against the strong impression; for when he heard me one day saying the words of absolution over his father, and noticed in the absolution from censures, which precedes the absolution from sin, the words *in quantum possum et tu indiges*, "As far as I have power and you need it," he at once fastened on these words, imagining that they formed part of the absolution from sin, and said to me: "So, then, you do not absolve absolutely, but only as far as you can." I explained to him as well as I could that these words were not part of the absolution from sin; and showed him that in the words which followed, *Ego te absolvo a peccatis tuis*, there was no condition whatsoever annexed.

The other thing that struck me was the untiring devotedness with which the daughter nursed her dying father. Her mother, whose gentleness and patience was always most remarkable, seemed to rely with all confidence on the care and skill of this indefatigable daughter. At last, early on the Saturday morning, while all were standing round his bed joining in the prayers of the Church, Mr C—— expired. Strained to the utmost by her watchful nursing night and day, the daughter had to be laid at once on a bed, and for a time it was feared that her mind had given way under the shock. All thoughts for the moment were turned towards her. She lay on the bed, talking without cessation, commonly about scenery, but every now and

again I heard the words, "Stafford, Stafford." I afterwards learned what was then in her mind, but meanwhile I begged to be left alone with her for a few minutes, and then I said to her: "I have a message for you from your father." At once the hysterical agitation ceased. She listened quite calmly, and from that time I do not think that there was any return of that kind of excitement.

Meanwhile the situation was in every way novel to the family. More than the rest the mother, who was strongly attached to all her children, felt very uneasy lest the conversion of her husband to the Roman Catholic Church might create amongst their Protestant friends a prejudice against her sons; and, therefore, she said to me with much earnestness before them all: "May I beg of you, sir, as a Christian and a gentleman, that for the present you will say nothing of what has happened in this house." I gave her a promise that the secret should be faithfully kept. Within a few hours, however, she and her children, all full of uprightness, on talking over the situation, came to the conclusion that concealment would not be desirable; that as their father had of his own will died a Roman Catholic, they were bound in duty to him to bury him in a Catholic cemetery and with all Catholic rites. Accordingly, both mother and children assisted at the Requiem Mass in the Church ot the Immaculate Conception, Farm Street; and I remember how much the poor mother was overcome when they were taking the coffin from the church to be interred in the Catholic cemetery at Kensal Green. One direction given with regard to the burial has remained in my memory. The family seemed to leave all arrangements to the

daughter and one of her brothers, the one who first met me at the door. They both had a strong wish that no slab or tomb should cover the grave: they preferred the green sward. This brother and sister who arranged their father's funeral were the first of their family to follow him into the Catholic Church, and the first also to follow him to the grave. They both died within a few years after their conversion, but not before they had edified many by their holy lives.

Miss M. C——, the daughter, remained for some months after her father's death in a state of great exhaustion. Always delicate, she was altogether unequal to the long-continued nursing, through which her great affection for him sustained her at the time. During this state of prostration I prepared her for her reception into the Church, and when I gave her Holy Communion for the first time she received It kneeling on the floor in the middle of her room and trembling all over; and she was so overcome by the sense of reverence and awe that for three months she could not nerve herself to repeat the effort. I learned afterwards that from childhood her nervous temperament had been exceptionally sensitive. She told me that, when seven years of age, she once heard a doctor explaining to her father the circulation of the blood, and that the effect on her was such that she fainted away. To this sensitive temperament was joined very strong affection for her family; and her father's sufferings during his long illness had drawn her heart especially towards him, and her devotedness was fully appreciated by him and very much endeared her to him.

Her very weak health and her attendance on her father prevented her from mixing much in

society, and the domestic retirement thus enforced was peculiarly welcome to her disposition, which was shy and retiring. I observed also in her a cautious prudence and a thoughtful consideration for all around her that was most pleasing and edifying. Not less so was her eagerness and industry to learn more and more about religion when she had entered the Church. Her talents and her docility were both exceptional. She picked out very quickly what was valuable in the lives of the saints and in ascetical treatises, and set herself earnestly to put in practice all that she learned. The results of this hunger and thirst for sanctity were soon very manifest. Her thoughts became entirely absorbed in our Blessed Lord; she cared little to speak of anything else, and had a great zeal to draw others to His love. Remembering the very strong love she had for her father, I asked her one day whether she had anything of the same kind for our Lord. She answered at once without any hesitation, "Much stronger"; that is to say, that her love for our Lord was much stronger than her affection for her father had ever been. After I had begun to know her intimately, I asked her one day if she could account for the frequent repetition of the word "Stafford" on the day of her father's death. In reply she told me this story, that she was staying with her father at H——, one of his residences in Scotland, about nine miles from a railway station, when, feeling himself much worse than usual, he said to her: "I must go to London, for two reasons: I want to see Sir H. Thompson, and I also want to see a Roman Catholic priest." She travelled with him, and at Stafford very violent internal pains came on, which she could do

nothing to relieve, and was obliged to look on while he suffered so acutely. This scene remained on her mind, and haunted her in those hours of anguish after his death. I have mentioned that her nervous system was peculiarly sensitive, and that from childhood the very thought of blood was most distressing to her. Self-conquest, however, she had always looked on as a duty, and after her conversion her courage increased wonderfully. During her father's illness she went against her horror of blood with a resolution that was heroic; and one or two years after his death, and about a year before her own death, she one day said abruptly to me: "I have accepted it." I asked her what she meant, and what it was she had accepted, but she begged me very earnestly not to speak any more on the subject. I found out afterwards that she had then a presentiment that she might have to undergo the torture of seeing her own blood flow, and that she had made an act of resignation to God's will on this point as on all others. Her presentiment came true, for a few days before her death I found her one day, when I entered her room, vomiting blood in large quantities, and I noticed that whenever there was a lull in the discharges of blood, she was kissing with great affection a little statue of St Joseph and a relic which she held in her hand.

Though reduced during the last year of her life to great weakness, she never was content to be unemployed. She managed to translate from the French that little book of devotion called *An Hour before the Blessed Sacrament*, of which several thousand copies have since been sold. She also used her talent for drawing to make a very effective sketch of the death of St Francis

Xavier. During the last year of her life she became acquainted with one whose spirit was in many points akin to her own, though in some things they differed widely. This was B—— Lady F——, recently left a widow in the flower of her age by the death of her husband. When they first became acquainted Miss C—— said to me: "I fear we shall not get on well together; she overwhelms me." For Lady F—— was naturally full of animation, and Miss C——, on the contrary, was timid and shy and very gentle. After a little while, however, they understood each other perfectly, and became very intimate. The bond of union was the love of our Lord and desire for holiness, which was growing in both. They were both most ardent and eager in the cause of our Lord; but one would conceal her desires and suffer in silence from them, whereas the other, Lady F——, was more impetuous, and could not suppress her thoughts. One day, for instance, she came to me in tears, and said with strong feeling that it was a great trial to her faith to see how the Chinese and Hindoos were left in such a neglected state. The Providence of God seemed to forget them. I said to her, "Are you in earnest?" "In earnest!" she answered, "of course I am. I feel it most intensely." For some time she ran on in that strain. At last I asked her, "Where did you get this compassion from?" "I don't know where I got it," was her answer; but after some thought she said, "I suppose God gave it to me." "Then," I said, "if God gave it to you, did He give you all His own compassion for these poor souls, or only a part?" After some hesitation she was obliged to answer, "I suppose only a part." "If that be the case," I answered,

"He must feel for the Chinese and Hindoos very much more than you do, and will be through all eternity grateful to you or any one else who will work for these poor souls." This thought put an end entirely to all the temptations against the providence of God. Very soon after she resolved to devote herself to the service of our Lord in a religious Order, and put this question to me: "Ought I not to choose the one in which life will be hardest?" "On the contrary," I said, "I advise you to choose the one in which life will be softest; for, seeing the state of your health, I fear they will all be too hard."

Through love for the poor she in the end made choice of the Irish Sisters of Charity, whose Blind Asylum and Hospital, and other houses of mercy, attract so much attention by the admirable way in which they are conducted. My fears proved too true. Her strength failed soon after the day of her profession; and we may hope that she was called away to receive the rewards promised to those who leave all to follow our Lord. Meanwhile, before she betook herself to religious life, and while her friend Miss C—— was preparing for death, I met her one day coming out of the sick-room, and she said to me, with her face quite bright, "I am so delighted to find that Mary C—— is afraid of death."

Miss C——'s thoughts and aspirations were habitually so high, that Lady F—— had begun to look upon her as altogether unearthly, and was glad to find that they had still some share of human frailty in common. One of Miss C——'s pious industries during her short Catholic life was to note down any text of Scripture or any little prayer which made an impression on her, in order that she might have them read to her

when she was dying. One word that specially laid hold of her mind was that word which the beloved disciple wrote concerning the close of his divine Master's life: "He loved to the end." She had it often before her as her end drew nigh. Sickness is apt to make us selfish. Others lavish all their attention on the one who is suffering, and so the sufferer easily comes to crave inordinately for sympathy, and to believe that it is right and reasonable that all care and attention and charity should centre on him or her. I noticed that Miss C——, quite aware of this danger, was ever striving to do some kindness either to her maid, or to the nun who was nursing her, or to her family. One night, knowing that it would please her mother, she called her to her bedside and conversed for a long time very intimately with her; and I remember hearing her mother say next day: "I would not have missed that hour for all the world." "He loved to the end," was her watchword. At the foot of her bed she had a large and very devout image of Christ crucified, and I saw her a day or two before she died raise herself in her bed, and as she fixed her eyes reverently on that crucifix, heard her say several times: "To the very end, my Lord, I will love you; to the end, to the very end."

When she expired, I remember saying to one of her brothers, then in the Guards, "Does that death console you?" He answered: "I cannot say that it consoles me, but it makes me very anxious to go and make another confession of my life." For he had also some time before entered the Church.

If my memory does not fail me, the first converted after her father's death was this daughter, the next her brother W——, the pale-

faced young man who, as I have said, met me at the door when I first went to visit his dying father, and whose edifying Catholic life was cut short by a very early death. Two other brothers and their mother followed afterwards. She had always lived contented with the religion of her childhood, never imagining that there was any creed better than the one she had been taught, and bearing very patiently all the discomforts of very delicate health, and ever striving to love our Lord and be a good wife and a good mother. Her husband's conversion on his death-bed left her naturally in a state of anxious bewilderment. She reverenced him greatly, and was sure that he must have good reasons for the step he had taken. One evening in the winter she was sitting beside the fire, opposite to her pale-faced son, who had already become a Catholic. Her mind was greatly agitated, and she said: "Well, of one thing I am sure, that if I read my Bible with a prayerful spirit, our Lord will guide me." I answered, drily and somewhat cruelly, "I am not so sure that He will." At these words she became much distressed, and bursting into tears, threw herself into her son's arms, saying: "Then all my hopes are gone." "No," I said, "there is no cause for losing hope." When she was calm, I gave her an explanation of my words. I said: "If I look at a music-book with a prayerful spirit, I shall not in that way learn the piano. I must have a master to teach me." She very soon understood the reasoning, and before long followed her husband and her son and daughter into the Catholic Church, in which her life of retirement and very suffering health has been consoled by union with our Lord in prayer and by the unchanging affection of her children.

I noticed in her case, as in others, how in consequence of early teaching, she could not at first relish books like the "Life of Christ," by St Bonaventure, in which the human nature of our Lord is brought prominently into view, but this difficulty the grace of God removed before long.

As soon as they were thus reunited in the Church of Christ, the great wish of mother and children was to show their gratitude to God by doing some work for His honour and the salvation of souls. After many careful deliberations, in which brothers and sister and mother all took part, they at last came to the conclusion that a church should be built at Castle Douglas, where the Irish population was without any spiritual help. Castle Douglas is, if I mistake not, distant nine miles from H——, which was now the property of Captain C——, who had become a Catholic. If he had looked to his own convenience, he naturally would have preferred to have a church in his own grounds, as so many Catholic families have had in this country; but he, as well as the rest of the family, thought most of the poor, as he was willing to subject himself to the labour of driving nine miles on Sunday to holy Mass, rather than deprive the poor of the unspeakable blessing of having a church in their midst. When their plan was thus fixed, they set about the execution at once; and it was most edifying to see how much thought, how much painstaking was cheerfully devoted to the work in order that all might be done well. W——, the pale-faced invalid, as he had more command of time than those in the army, was indefatigable in his journeys to and fro, to secure that no part of this offering to God and His poor should be

spoiled through want of care. The church and school at Castle Douglas, and the school chapel subsequently provided through their charity for the poor of Kircudbright, will be in time to come the best and lasting monument of this family blessed by God. Miss C—— died three years after her reception into the Church, one of those who, "made perfect in a short time, fulfil a long space."* Her brother G. W—— followed her three years later.

And here I may be permitted to add a word about one whose memory would have been preserved in these Funeral Sermons, had I not been hindered by sickness from saying a few words at her obsequies. It is not yet two months since Margaret, Countess of Newburgh, died on September 3, at the advanced age of eighty-nine. She was a very intimate friend both of Lady Lothian and Lady Georgiana Fullerton, and, I may add, a great favourite with all her relatives and friends who knew her. During the last years of her life it pleased God to deprive her entirely of her eyesight, and we all know how long and weary their days often become to the blind. "What manner of joy," old Tobias said, "shall be to me who sit in darkness and see not the light of heaven?" How many there have been who would at once say, "These are my thoughts." Lady Newburgh was a marvellous exception. Throughout her years of blindness her numerous friends and relatives were continually visiting her, not to brighten her hours, but to be gladdened by her never-failing cheerfulness and cordiality. For many years she had been a Catholic; but her old Protestant friends were

* Wisdom ii.

with her quite as much as the Catholics who in later years had learned to value her worth. And it was very notable with what straightforward simplicity she talked of Catholic matters and her Catholic views and opinions just as freely in presence of Protestants as with her most intimate Catholic friends.

Her cheerfulness under the loss of sight was maintained in great measure by her surprising spiritual industry. She had committed to memory a large store of psalms and prayers; and she was ever increasing her stock by having read to her favourite passages from the Holy Scripture till she knew them by heart. From this store of sacred words she drew her daily and hourly bread.

She suffered much from sleepless nights; but by night and by day she kept her mind, when she was alone, continually occupied with prayer; and this habit had become so much a second nature, that even during the last days of her life, when apparently she was only conscious for short moments, she was often repeating without ceasing the prayers to which she had been accustomed. Her place is empty now, and many will feel her loss; none more so than the poor. For though she often and often in her latter days repeated this lament, "I do nothing for the poor—absolutely nothing; I cannot go out; I cannot visit them"; yet at the same time, even when blind, she worked with her hands for them, and freely owned to me that besides casual almsgiving, she laid aside every month, out of her moderate income, £40 as the portion of the poor.

She was one of those blessed ones "who

understand concerning the poor and the needy," of whom the Psalmist tells us that "in the evil day the Lord will deliver them." *

R. I. P.

Kind reader, pray for her soul and the souls of all the Faithful departed.

Bournemouth, October 26, 1889.

P.S.—I have said that it is in deference to the advice of three friends that I publish this volume. It is quite probable that many more friends would recommend that funeral sermons should not be republished; and this for three reasons. First, because ordinarily they have to be written hurriedly. Very frequently not more than a day or two is allowed for preparation, or rather not more than the few hours that can be snatched from other pressing work during a day or two. Then, secondly, at a funeral the family and friends are in a specially indulgent frame of mind, willing to be content and pleased with any kind words uttered. Outside readers have not these feelings of partiality. Thirdly, in funeral discourses, preached at distant intervals and places far apart, the same thoughts and phrases may often recur, which when brought together into one volume are apt to weary and displease the reader.

* Ps. xl.

I--Sir Charles Tempest

A Discourse preached at his Funeral in the Chapel at Broughton, December 18, 1865

Man, when he shall be dead, and stripped, and consumed, I pray you where is he?—Job xiv, 10.

Yes, brethren, this is the question which will from time to time force itself upon us: Where is he? And the first answer to be given to it is this: He is not here. Never again shall he rule in this domain; his place is empty. We try, naturally enough, to throw a decent, an honourable pall over the work we are engaged in today; but in reality we are here assembled to assist at the solemn stripping and dismantling of one whose little day of power is ended, and to inaugurate the beginning of that decay appointed by our Creator to consume the flesh of man. This is the first answer: He is not here. But this answer cannot content us, brethren. Again the question rises before us: "Man, when he is dead, and stripped, and consumed, I pray you where is he?" And at once the attempt to find a reply reminds us of man's complex nature—that there are two distinct parts of him: the body, that comes of this earth, and now lies lifeless here; and the soul, that came from God, and never can die. And we cannot with one answer tell the story of both. Death has divided these

two companions that were one; and we must also take them separately.

If then, when you ask me, "Where is he?" you speak of his mortal body, which remains in our keeping; if your meaning is, Where shall his place be; where shall his grave be made? I answer at once, there where a Christian's consecrated body ought to lie, near to the altar of Christ Jesus. Anointed and consecrated when life begins, anointed and made pure and holy when life is drawing to a close, a Christian's body should rest near the tabernacle. For the tabernacle, if it be the dwelling-place of the Son of God amongst men, from whence, as from the sun in the firmament, a stream of light and warmth pours forth upon our lifetime, so also may we say that it is the coffin and the grave in which we bury the Body of our Lord in the midst of His departed servants. See what a narrow prison it is, brethren! Straiter and more humble than the coffin we prepare for man, the tabernacle ought to reconcile a Christian to the narrowness of his own coffin and the silence of his grave. Let him then lie near to the tabernacle, underneath that altar which he built to the honour of his God, that so even in death his silent lips may seem to utter the Christian's hope, "I know that my Redeemer liveth; and in the last day I am to rise again out of the earth, and in my flesh I shall see my God.* Laid up in my bosom is this my hope." There, then, brethren, let his body sleep, near to Him who is "the first-born from the dead." †

But as we know that the body is not the Christian man, the question is not answered yet. "Where is he?" Where is the soul that cannot

* Job xix, 25, 26. † Coloss. i, 18.

die, that cannot sleep? We cannot set this question aside. What, then, is the answer, brethren? What answer can we give, except by turning to the altar and saying to our Lord, as the prophet said of old: "O Lord God, Thou knowest"?* We know nothing of the secrets of Thy judgement seat. On which side the tree fell we know not. Whether the dying man be worthy of love or hatred, we know not. "O Lord God, Thou knowest." I am aware, brethren, that it is almost a fashion and received usage in this country, at the death-bed, as soon as the last gasp is drawn, to lift one's eyes for a moment and say: "'Tis well, 'tis well; he is gone to God." We give the verdict flippantly. It is the established form; it is a cheap word that costs nothing, means nothing, does nothing, and is nothing worth. It is a phrase that will serve for saint or sinner. Ecclesiastes tells us that men used words in this way in his time. "I saw," he says, "the wicked buried: who also when they were yet living were praised in the city as men of just works"; and then he adds, "This also is vanity."† Is it not, brethren, a vanity, a hollow emptiness, a very heartless parting word, to say with our lips: "He is gone to God," and so leave the dead man to his doom, whatever it may be?

I am sure, my brethren, that you will not, when death comes, be willing that your friend should say over you: "He is gone to God; he was a man of just works," and then forget you. And I should think it very profane trifling to stand over the grave of a man who in his life had earnest thoughts concerning his future, and to despatch his case with this threadbare trivi-

* Ezec. xxxvii, 3. † Eccles. viii, 10.

ality: "He is gone to God." We must rather face the question, brethren. It will not do for us to blink it, and to remain "ignorant concerning them that sleep."* For the sake of our brethren departed and for our own sakes, in order that we may conjecture concerning our own future, we must follow the dead, and ask once more the question: "Man, when dead, and stripped, and consumed, I pray you where is he?"

Well, brethren, it seems to me that when this question is asked over the coffin of one who was both a Christian and a gentleman of high position, a man of this world and of the next, one of those who seem sometimes to be compelled by a necessity to grapple with the difficulty of serving two masters, there necessarily rise up within us two opposite sets of thoughts. Something happens like to what is recorded of the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem. Around the foundations of this second Temple "the people shouted with a great shout, praising the Lord"; but the fathers and ancients, who had seen the glory of the former Temple, "wept with a loud voice, so that one could not distinguish the voice of the shouts of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people."† Even so, two conflicting sets of thoughts rise up as we think of the career of one who has been both a child of faith and a man of riches and worldly rank. Let me briefly present them to you.

In the first place, brethren, looking at one side of the picture, we cannot forget the language in which Christ our Lord, who knows all things and exaggerates nothing, speaks of the rich and their chances of salvation. We cannot forget those words of His that never can pass away:

* 1 Thess. iv, 12. † Esdras ii, 13.

"Woe to you, rich!" and that sentence which He uttered once and again with so much sadness: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven!"* We cannot ignore these words; we cannot explain them away. Of course we know, from our blessed Saviour's own gloss, that the grace of redemption is plentiful enough to enable both rich and poor to save their souls; but it always remains undeniable that a rich man, a man of rank and station in this world, meets on his road to heaven with special and most serious difficulties which do not beset the path of the poor and subject. It will not be necessary to set forth all these hindrances. I shall only briefly touch on three of them that are pointed out in holy Scripture.

The first is contained in that general rule laid down by Ecclesiastes: "All things obey money."† A rich man is naturally surrounded by obsequiousness. His will is law. No one cares to become a martyr by contradicting him; and as there are many glad to stand well with him, there is among dependents a rivalry to do his will quickly. We say to God: "May Thy will be done, O Lord!" But oftentimes the will and pleasure of a powerful man is executed more faithfully and more speedily than the will of God. Moreover, if a man in a high position errs, it is hard to find one among his friends that will point out his error to him. If a poor man, a subject-man, a serving-man, commit a fault, the chances are that he will soon hear of it; and perhaps in such terms as will not easily be forgotten, and will deter him from relapsing. A great man may never have the truth told to him until he hears it at the judgement-seat from our Saviour

* Mark x, 23. † Eccles. x, 19.

Jesus Christ, who does not stand in awe of riches. This being the case, we can easily understand, brethren, how that sentence of holy Writ comes true: "Man, when he was in honour, did not understand";* he is easily blinded and lives in delusion, and thus his salvation is much endangered.

Secondly, brethren, the same inspired writer† gives us this caution: "Speak not evil of the rich man in thy private chamber; because even the birds of the air will carry thy voice, and he that hath wings will tell what thou hast said." Those creatures here described—those men that have wings—are still found on earth, in and about the rich man's home. He will receive speedy intelligence of the evil which his friend and his relative have said of him in their secret chamber. And as in our days news that comes to us with such wonderful rapidity does not always reach us unchanged, so, brethren, it often chances that the winged messenger who comes to bring quickly to a great man the latest unkind word uttered against him heightens the unpleasant flavour of his tale. What is the consequence? We all find it hard enough to live in charity with those around us, and to forgive our wrongs, real or imagined. But the rich man, who is the victim of systematic talebearing, how is he to keep charity alive? How shall he maintain the meekness of Christ crucified?

And now, brethren, observe the last of these three hindrances that meet a rich man on his road to heaven. You find it set forth in the words of Ecclesiasticus: "O death, how bitter is thy remembrance to the man that hath peace in

* Ps. xlviii. † Eccles. x, 20.

his possessions, to a man that is at rest!"* How easy it is for a rich man to find peace in his possessions, to be at rest and at home here on earth, and to dread the thought of death! What so natural? And yet, brethren, if the light of faith is in us, and we know anything of that compact on which we come upon earth, that after our short pilgrimage here we are to go back true and loyal to our God, who sent us hither, we must own that it is nothing less than a state of utter disorder and enormity when a Christian man finds his peace in his possessions here, and is unwilling to pass through the gates of death to go home to his God. Assuredly there are many who, as they kneel before the altar, fixing their eyes wistfully on their hidden God who dwells there, can say very truly and very feelingly what the blessed Apostle said: I desire "to be dissolved and to be with Christ."† Nay, when we even find it recorded of a servant of God of modern times that he said to his bosom friend that, were it revealed to him for certain that he must live out the day, and was not to die before night, the news would break his heart, are we to disbelieve his story? Is it incredible that a Christian, living by faith, should hope from hour to hour to hear the summons: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh"? The bridegroom of this world can hope for his wedding-day, the schoolboy for his holiday, the prisoner for the day of his release. Is it, then, a prodigy that a man who believes that Christ Jesus is preparing a place for him should be able to say with Job: "All the days that I am now in warfare I am expecting till my change come"?‡ Is this a miraculous sanctity quite exceptional? or does

* Ecclus xli, 1. † Phil. i. ‡ Job xiv, 14.

our blessed Saviour expect us all to live like sentinels before an enemy, watching, like servants waiting on the look-out for their master's coming home? Brethren, this habitual expectation of the world to come ought not to be exceptional holiness. It should be the rule; and the real exception and the prodigy ought to be the state of a man who has peace in his possessions, and to whom the remembrance of death is bitter. Yet how easily this becomes the rich man's state!

These, brethren, are three of the difficulties that are attached to a high position in this world. What then? When we ask concerning the rich man departed, "Where is he?" do we despair of him? No, brethren; for, as I have said, there is another side of the picture. These are only the natural difficulties which beset his position. But above all natural difficulties the Son of God has raised man. Christ our Saviour has earned for us all a plentiful redemption; and He said to all Christians: "Have confidence; I have overcome the world."*

And here, brethren, let me, before going further, call attention to the hope which we derive, when thinking of the fate of departed friends, from the doctrine delivered to us concerning purgatory. It is an ancient belief. How many long centuries have rolled away since the old Jewish chronicler penned the words: "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins!"† Our fathers believed, and handed down to us this creed. But, brethren, a large number of those around us, from the training of their childhood, are accustomed to consider the notion of a

* John xvi, 33. † 2 Macc., xii, 46.

purgatory as a cruel fiction. Yet I would ask any thoughtful person amongst us who has watched in sorrow by a death-bed; I would ask the mother, the wife, the father, the husband, the child; and I would ask you, my reverend brethren, who so often have anxiously to watch the dying man as you have to answer for his soul—if we were obliged to believe that the instant the heart of man beats no more the soul must either be pure enough to enter heaven or must perish eternally, which of us could face a death-scene? If we are to form an opinion at all, how often in our lives are we so blest as to find our dying friend prepared for his passage so thoroughly that our firm conviction is that his soul is without wrinkle and without stain? And with what courage should we lie down to die ourselves, were we bound to believe that at the instant of death we must either be spotless and owe nothing to God's justice, or else perish for ever? Happily, this is not the faith that has come down to us. We believe, as our fathers believed, that Almighty God, in His great mercy, wishing that none may perish, and seeing how forgetful and improvident man is while busy here on earth, has appointed a time after death when the Christian can sin no more, but can do penance for sins committed. This is our faith and our hope.

And akin to this is another dogma of our creed, equally consoling to those who stand round a death-scene. We proclaim it daily: "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." We believe that Christ did really and truly say to His ministers: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them." * And, as I have said, this dogma helps much to make us look on the death of a Christian,

* John xx, 23.

not as destruction and ruin, as those do who have no hope, but as the sleep of peace. We do not feel bound to establish, before we can hope for him, that the dying man has never sullied his baptismal robe; for we have in our ears those words of holy Church, which we hope to hear read over our own death-beds—and mark, I pray you, brethren, how that wise Mother, inspired by the Spirit of God, pleads for her dying child in the hour of his helplessness—"It is true, O Lord, that he sinned; but he has always firmly believed in Thee, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; he has had a zeal for Thy honour, and has adored Thee as his God and the Creator of all things." With this language of holy Church to guide us, how are we to answer concerning him who lies here in the midst of us dead and stripped and consumed, this question which I have put: "Where is he?"

Well, brethren, the words I have just quoted are not, as I have told you already, my own; they are the words of holy Church; and yet, however long I might study and meditate, I do not think I could find any other words that would express better the idea that I have on my mind of the career of him whom we are here to bury.

Were I speaking before the children and heirs of the Pharisees, who loved to tell even the Almighty that they were not, like the rest of men, sinners, I might be somewhat loth to adopt this account which holy Church gives of her frail child; but as I am speaking to you—who do not claim to be better than your fathers, who confess to God with Daniel, "It is not for our own justifications that we present our prayer, but for Thy tender mercies,"* who daily say with David,

* Dan. ix, 18.

"If Thou shalt daily observe iniquities, O Lord, Lord, who shall endure it?" *—I am not at all afraid to say before you of him whom God has called away that he may have had his measure of faults and frailties; that he may not have passed unscathed through the ordeal of a high position; for you will not on that account throw the stone at him. He erred, no doubt, in many things; for he was one of us. But at the same time, brethren, this much I can say—and I would not dare to say it in your presence, nor in the presence of the consecrated corpse, nor standing, as I do, beside the tabernacle of our Lord, if it savoured at all of profane flattery; no, I would not say it were it not a simple act of justice to say it, and a calumny to suppress it—I say it, and the voice of his intimate friends will be with me—that he was in a remarkable degree a man true to the ancient faith of his fathers. "He ever believed in Thee, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and had a zeal for Thy honour, and worshipped Thee as his God and the Creator of all things." Living in a land where there is much to tempt a Catholic in high station to form for himself a patchwork code that is neither Protestant nor Catholic, he was singularly true to the unpopular creed. His faith oozed out unbidden on all occasions.

There was in him an unmistakable zeal for God's honour, and the spread of religion amongst the poor. One of the last desires I heard him utter was that he might be able to leave behind him, as a legacy to the poor, another church, another altar of the living God, in addition to those he had erected or helped to

* Ps. cxxix.

erect.* Brethren, the man who knows what a church and an altar is to a poor population, and who has an ambition to leave such an inheritance, he has in him the spirit of faith and a zeal for the honour of his God. Knowing, therefore, that God is not wont to forget those who do not forget Him; when we see the life of this man of riches and position brought to a close by a death singularly sudden—yet not at all unprovided, but, on the contrary, foreseen and expected by him, and prepared with a care and diligence much beyond what is usual—it is hard to believe that this departed man is one of those whom God chastises in His anger. A death preceded by retirement and the holy Exercises of St Ignatius is surely a mercy that we would covet for ourselves.† The man who forgets his God ends by forgetting himself. If, then, a man does not in the end forget his own soul, is it not a sign that he has not forgotten his God, and is not forgotten by his God? Again, brethren, be it, if you will, that as we detect faulty peculiarities in our own characters, so we can see flaws and blemishes in the character of him concerning whom we are asking this question, "Where is he?" yet remember that it is notorious among all the circle of his acquaintance that he was one from whom we all might learn the holy prudence of the Gospel that moves a Christian man to redeem his sins with alms. As his life advanced, as

* Besides maintaining the chapel and schools at Broughton Sir Charles Tempest built the church and the spacious school-buildings adjoining at Skipton, and also the church of the Sacred Heart and presbytery at Blackpool.

† Sir Charles Tempest spent eight days in retreat at Stonyhurst College. His retreat ended on the feast of the Immaculate Conception of our Lady, and on the morning of that festival he died—quite suddenly.

eternity drew near, all his former tastes seemed gradually to merge in a very strong desire to give abundant alms. And just at this moment, as we stand around his bier, it is a very special consolation, and a well-spring of hope, to remember with what generous charity he came to the relief of those who dropped into the grave by his side; how active he was in securing the aid of prayer and the holy sacrifice for departed friends. Deeply was that ancient truth fixed in his soul, that "it is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins." Now, brethren, when we consider that Christ Jesus spoke even to the Pharisees the words, "Give alms, and lo! all things are made clean to you"; * and that in the days of old that proud king, who beyond other men was perverted and corrupted by riches and the fascination of greatness, was yet assured by the prophet that he could redeem even such sins as his by alms: † when we remember too how very much our fate at the judgement-seat is to depend on works of mercy; we cannot help looking for some marked grace and blessing on the life and death-bed of one who was so bountiful to those in need. And do we not find that grace and blessing? To die as he died, giving alms, a large alms to poor children; ‡ to die, after a careful survey of past years, with the grace of absolution fresh upon the soul; to die surrounded by many altars on which that holy sacrifice is offered whose efficacy descends as a dewfall of heavenly mercy on the graves of the dead and reaches them in their prison-house; to die in the early morning, when the hour of Sacrifice is close

* Luke xi. † Dan. iv, 24.
‡ The schools attached to St Stephen's Church, Skipton,

at hand—brethren, these are graces such as we well might covet, and such as God might well grant to the grateful prayers of the poor and the needy. And besides these privileges of the death-bed I must notice two other graces, which through the changes of life seemed to remain unchanged within him, and were in their turn prolific of other blessings.

In his early childhood, while yet at college, on that festival of our Lady which had become the festival of all times, he knelt at the foot of the altar of the Mother of God, and pronounced there a sacred promise *never through life to abandon her, never to say or to do aught that could dishonour her, and never to permit those under him to show her disrespect.* To this compact he joined this prayer to blessed Mary: *Stand by me in all the actions of my life, and do not forsake me in the hour of my death.* As he grew up, he passed, as I have said, through the many dangers of a rich man's life; but I think I can safely say it, that no one of his most familiar friends ever knew him to violate that promise of his childhood. He was true to our blessed Lady. Must we not then naturally expect to find that she would do her part? And trained as we have been to believe that because a woman had so great a share in the ruin of man, God has given to Mary a great power to forward man's salvation; and that because a woman prevailed by her persuasion with the first Adam unto our destruction, God has given to Mary a special privilege of prevailing by her prayers with her Son unto our salvation, should we not expect to meet with some token of her protection in his career? When, therefore, we see him at the close of life led away by God's providence from his own home;

when we find that his last journey is a pilgrimage to do honour to our Lady; when we see his death-bed spread for him in that home of his school-days, where he had pledged his fealty to the Mother of God; when we note, moreover, that the day of his death is the anniversary-day of that vow of his childhood, we are obliged to do violence to all our ordinary notions and feelings, if we are not to believe that these circumstances are indications that our blessed Lady remembered the compact, and had heard the prayer, and did not forsake him at the hour of death.

The other grace that I allude to, brethren, is one that often grows out of a devotion to our Lady. "Through Mary to Jesus," was the saying of a great saint. Our belief is that a devotion to the Mother leads us to a reverence and love of her divine Son. And assuredly in the case of him who lies here dead there was joined to this life-long attachment to the Mother of God a very deep and very persevering respect and veneration for the adorable sacrifice of the altar. I have said already that to give to the poor an altar was one of his marked predilections; and I have also alluded to the generous zeal with which he laboured to secure the efficacious virtue of the holy sacrifice for the souls of his departed relatives and friends. Well, if he knew its worth to others, so could he appreciate its power over his own destiny. To be present at the holy sacrifice whenever opportunity was given he seemed to consider a sacred duty. To be absent from the offering up of the body and blood of Christ without due cause, he seemed to look upon as an ungrateful outrage. Any priest who chanced to be his guest, at whatever early hour he wished to celebrate the holy mysteries

previous to his departure, was sure to find the head of the household ready before the altar. Well, brethren, if we believe at all in the efficacy of prayer, if we are willing to give credence to pious tales that teach us how fidelity to some morning prayer has merited the grace of a happy death; which of us can believe that this unflagging assiduity for so many years in assisting at the holy sacrifice produced no effect? If the Almighty gives a man an enduring grace that moves him day after day to secure for himself the aid of that powerful prayer which the Son of God puts up for us from the altar, which is Calvary perpetuated, is not that enduring grace a strong mark of predestination? The ancient saying was that whom God intends to ruin, him he first stultifies. When, therefore, we see that God does not suffer wise habits to be abandoned, does not withdraw good graces, enables a man to persevere in holy practices, we cannot persuade ourselves that there is not eternal mercy in store for that man. We may see the mote in his eye; we may detect many weaknesses and mistakes in his conduct; but God is a Father and a Creator, and God has given His own blood for man. If we were creators, we should find excuses for the work of our hands which we see not now. If we had given our lives for a friend, we should have a power to invent, to create apologies for him that no one else could devise. Knowing, then, that the soul of him whose body is with us is gone to be judged by its Creator and its Redeemer, and not by the rigour of man, we have a good hope. We see the mark of God's mercy on his childhood, on his manhood, on his deathbed; therefore do we hope that that mercy will

also follow him to the grave, and that he will rest in peace, and in due time will rise again out of the earth, and in his flesh shall see his Saviour. *Fiat! fiat!*

R. I. P.

Kind reader, pray for his soul and the souls of all the Faithful departed.

NOTE.—While preaching this funeral Sermon, I was painfully alive to the fact that many of my intimate friends were inclined to judge Sir Charles Tempest with great rigour on account of his testamentary arrangement, by which the nephew who naturally would have come in for the estates was disinherited. Happily there is good reason to believe that, even before he went to make his retreat, Sir Charles had made up his mind to go to London as soon as the weather permitted, in order to alter his will by removing whatever was harsh and uncharitable. These pious intentions would certainly have gained strength during the retreat, "mais l'homme propose, et Dieu dispose."

II--Hon. Charles Langdale, S.J.

A Discourse preached at his Funeral in the Chapel at Houghton, December 9, 1868

Honour thy father in work and word, and all patience, that a blessing may come upon thee from him, and his blessing may remain in the latter end.—Ecclus iii, 9, 10.

My brethren, all who are present here to-day I look upon as members of one family, children of one household, come together to lay in their sacred resting-place the bones of the good old father whose soul went back "to God who gave it"* on the first day of this month, and whose mortal remains we have brought hither for burial. I know quite well that we do not all stand related to Mr Langdale in the same degree or by the same title. They, a privileged few, who had a right from infancy to call him father, who for so many years found in him a true father, and who during that second childhood of old age which God in His mercy has instituted, had the happiness of nursing him and repaying him some part of that true love which he ever bore to his family, they now have their own proper and sacred place around his coffin.

Next, brethren, come those who were united to Mr Langdale by the tie of intimate friendship, contracted either while standing by his side in the battle of his public life or during the sweet intercourse of domestic intimacy.

---

* Ecclus xii,

Lastly, by a solemn vow, which he had contemplated for many years, for which he had long made preparation, but which from circumstances he could not consummate till the close of his life, he on his death-bed chose for himself the very humble position of a lay-brother in the Society of Jesus; and thus gave to many more the happiness of being united to so good a man by the triple cord of the three religious vows.

These are special and intimate ties that bind some here present more closely to this faithful servant of God who is gone from us. But there is another bond of union common to us all. For I think I am well justified in saying that all of us here present may stand around his grave as family mourners, as children of his household, for this simple reason that he had adopted us all, and was the acknowledged father and patriarch of the oppressed Catholic community in England. For here, brethren, as elsewhere, the Church of our crucified Lord has been true to the description He gave of it, a weak little flock, a flock of sheep among wolves. Here, as elsewhere, the people have raged and devised vain things, and the princes have met together against Christ and His spouse, the holy Church. And during the last quarter of a century, whenever there has been a moment of special difficulty and danger, the Catholic body in this country, the bishops and the clergy, the nobility, the gentry and the poor, have with a common instinct turned their eyes towards Mr Langdale. And he unhesitatingly, forgetting his horror of precedence, obeying what I may call a vocation, at once stood forward, to strike a blow if manliness was required, but more often to pour oil on the waters; to win battles and gain possession of

the land, according to our Saviour's promise, by meekness.

He was, then, brethren, a father to us all. And had it not been for the strict and repeated prohibitions which in his humility he left behind him, and which those who loved him dared not disregard, the Catholics of England, clergy and laity, would in a body have gathered together round his bier as one family of sincere and hearty mourners. We then surely have a right to mourn over him now as children of one household.

And if by chance there are any here especially forlorn and desolate; if the widow be here and the helpless orphan, they above all have a right to stand close to the coffin of this good father. For in the very centre of his heart it was written that "Religion clean and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their tribulations."* And none will be more glad to see the widow and the orphan take their place amongst his family than they who revered and loved their father even more for his faith and charity than for the natural ties of flesh and blood.

I can speak then, brethren, familiarly concerning him to you as to his kinsmen; and can say to each of you in the inspired words: "Honour thy father in work and word, and in all patience, that a blessing may come upon thee from him, and the blessing may endure in the latter end." Before, however, I proceed to unfold the thought contained in these words, I will beg of you to turn your hearts to her who was the best and most blessed of parents—who had the best and most blessed of Sons—to ask her

* Jas i, 27.

by her motherly love for Jesus, by His filial love for her, to obtain for us grace that we may carry away from the grave to-day a resolution to honour this venerable father both in work and in word, in all patience, that a blessing may come from him to us, and endure with us in the latter days.

And now, brethren, in one of its parts, namely, "Honour thy father in word," this counsel of the Holy Ghost is having its fulfilment already. For, as usually happens when a good man dies, death has opened the eyes and unlocked the lips of those who survive. It was only when our Saviour uttered the last loud cry and bowed His head, and when His soul was gone back to the hands of His Father, that men began to see and know, and to strike their breasts and say to each other: "Indeed this was the Son of God."* So has it ever been since. It is when at last the end comes suddenly, and, in spite of warnings, unexpected—it is when all the tests at hand have been applied and leave no doubt; when the fixed eye, the motionless lips, the still, unchanging face, make it quite certain that we need no longer expect one word, one sigh, one glance; when at last we say reluctantly, "He is dead," and the word passes on with a magical speed—that we awake as from a dream, and recognize the great worth of the treasure which God has so long left in the midst of us. Tongues are now loosened; and men gather in little groups and speak of him who is gone. And persons, till now strangers to each other, if they chance to have seen the good man during life, think that a plea for acquaintance is thus established between them; and they converse a little while about the

* Matt. xvii.

holy life and conversation of him whom God has called away.

And so it happened now, brethren, when the word was whispered quickly about: "He is dead; good old Mr Langdale is dead." Each one had his little tribute to pay. Each one had his word of comment, his little funeral discourse. And as, passing from group to group, I heard recorded now one, now another little fragment of his life—some word of his or some holy deed recounted with emotion—I was forcibly reminded of the words which we read in Ecclesiasticus concerning the good King Josias: "The memory of Josias is like the composition of a sweet perfume made by the art of the perfumer. His remembrance shall be as sweet as honey in every mouth; and as music at a banquet of wine."* For when a true servant of God sleeps in the Lord, and you go about among the mourners, it is not one gigantic achievement, or one great act of heroism that you hear recorded; no, the soul of a just man seems to be like the Church in miniature, "Clothed round about with variety."† Each friend contributes some little incident or trait of character unlike the rest, but all in keeping. And out of these countless fragments is made up the fragrant recollection, sweet as the perfume composed by the skill of the perfumer; the tale of an edifying life which is pleasant to the tongue that tells it as the sweet honeycomb, and to the ear that listens "as music at the banquet of wine."

And remember now, dear brethren, that if I here reproduce before you a few of those fragments of Mr Langdale's holy life, gathered up from those who knew him, my object is not to

* Ps. xliv. † Ecclus xlix.

please the ears of his family, for this would be unworthy of the sacred ministry. And moreover, as a friend who knew his character, I could never bring myself to outrage his habits by making an idol of him now, and offering him unholy incense; still less could I find it in my heart to do an injury to the children he cherished, while standing beside the coffin of the father whom we venerated so much.

No, brethren, if I honour him in words, it is that all of us, and especially those nearest to him, may be moved to honour him in work and in all patience. It is in the hope that his mantle and his double spirit may come down, first on his family, and then on all here present, that I shall speak of his virtues. For if faith comes by hearing, so in a case like this must edification also come by hearing. It is while listening to triumphs of grace in one by nature weak as ourselves that we are emboldened and gain courage, and hearken favourably while our good angel whispers to our soul: "Go thou and do likewise."*

His double spirit I say, brethren, because I propose to dwell with you for a little while both on his interior life and on his life of activity before men; first to throw together such facts concerning the hidden life of his soul as I have been able to learn from those who watched his daily practice, and then to add a very few words concerning his life of activity, with which I had less opportunity of being familiar.

Wishing then, brethren, to review together the scenes of this edifying life, we naturally and as a matter of course, I think, go first to find this faithful servant where he was so often to be

* Luke x.

found—at the foot of the altar. How familiar a word in his soul was that of the Psalmist: "I will go in to the altar of God."* Among the questions which escaped unbidden the lips of those who heard the tidings of his death, how often—who can tell?—was that one repeated: "Did he die in his place in church? Did he die before the Blessed Sacrament?" For it was the expectation of many who saw how much the church was become the home of his old age, and how his limbs failed him as he bent his steps towards the altar, that our Blessed Saviour would permit this devout and persevering worshipper to say in presence of the tabernacle, "Now Thou dost dismiss Thy servant in peace,"† and there fall asleep in the Lord. And, indeed, within a little the expectation was realized. For when now all seemed consummated, when the last anointing and the Viaticum for the great journey had been administered, the last blessing given, and nothing apparently was now wanting but to say: "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit," suddenly, to the surprise of those beside him, the dying man expressed his intention of assisting once more at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; and this so calmly and so firmly that no one could desire to gainsay his wish. And then indeed there was good reason to hope that the Word made Flesh would Himself from the altar speak the summons to His servant: "Go forth, Christian soul!"—so like to death was that farewell visit to the altar. He did not, however, die before the altar. In this case God did not dispose as men had planned. Still their argument was very plausible. "He ought to have died there, for it was his home. At what hour of the

* Ps. xlii. † Luke ii.

day might you not expect to find him there? When was it too early, when too late for him to find his way to the House of our Lord? Do you recollect him before the daylight on the winter morning, his grey hairs bent down at the door of the confessional? Do you remember him on the cold winter night, when other gentlemen were at the dinner-table, taking his place beside the poor man to follow the Stations of the Cross? Did you ever observe the regularity of his mid-day visit to our Lord upon the altar, and his daily act of homage to his patron, St Joseph? Was there ever a church service in the morning, or the evening, or the middle day, from which the good old man was absent when he might be present?

Such things men say of him, my brethren; and, in good truth, if we question those who knew his thoughts most intimately, they tell us that, to judge by his practice, you would say that there was a special precept laid on him to assist at every service or holy exercise in church with as much fidelity as ordinary Christians manifest in assisting at the Holy Sacrifice on Sunday. If there was a festival or some special devotion in a distant parish, the weakness of old age did not hinder him from finding his way thither, so strictly did he consider himself bound to show reverence to our Blessed Saviour on the altar; and at the same time so great was his hunger and thirst for an increase of grace, of which he deemed himself exceptionally needy.

And besides his perseverance, in despite of age and decay, in the temple of God, there was also a fearless forgetfulness of human eyes in his demeanour there, which even the stranger noticed. For men are well aware, brethren, that

the common fault of well-born gentlemen in these our days is not to pray in the corner of streets, as the Pharisee loved to do, but, though brave and manly in all else, to turn cowards when the time comes for acts of devotion, even such as are necessary for salvation. A respectable sinner, a sinner of family and position, as we say, even when penitent will sometimes spend money and travel far to hide his penitence and receive his pardon where no human eye can recognize him. To this timidity Mr Langdale was a contrast. "Do you remember," men are asking now, "how that brave old gentleman used, at the very church-door, in sight of all who entered and went out, daily to bend laboriously his knees, and, with his venerable head bowed down before the statue of our Lady of Sorrows, do her public homage, as a pious child or devout woman would?"

Here, brethren, let me say once again what I have said to you already, that my hope, while recounting these things, is that our good angel will from time to time say persuasively in the depths of our souls, "Go thou and do the like." *

Still, brethren, I do not think that anything that was witnessed in church could give an adequate idea of the life of prayer to which this servant of God had trained himself. Luckily, when death comes, we learn more than was public till then. Our Saviour's words seem then to have their fulfilment: "There is nothing hidden that shall not be revealed." † When He Himself died upon the cross, the veil that hid the secret sanctuary was torn asunder; and now, at the death of a true follower of Christ, the veil

* Luke x † Matt, x

that conceals the privacy of domestic life is in great measure withdrawn, and those most near and dear think it "honourable," as the Archangel Raphael said, "to reveal the works of God." * We must, then, enter into the private sanctuary of his chamber to understand the union which this devout man maintained with his God. And in order to group together in a more orderly way the details of his life of prayer, and give the key that explains many of his habits, I will here mention that early in life he adopted the custom of retiring every year for eight days to the seclusion of the Novitiate of the Society of Jesus to follow the exercises of St Ignatius and to arrange the affairs of his inward soul. And whereas other good men carry with them out of Retreat principles which they apply to their condition of life, it seemed as if Mr Langdale went further, and, though obliged to live in the world, was even then attracted by the novice's holy life, and was resolved, as if in preparation, to engraft upon his domestic life as much of the exercises and habits of the Novitiate as was compatible with his duties to his family.

The novice at early morning prevents the sun, and earlier than the hired workman begins his day of prayer and labour. Mr Langdale throughout his life, even to a late old age, rose in all seasons of the year at the same time at which he rose in the Novitiate, and by a dim candlelight began his mental prayer. And from that early hour till far into the night, so often was he found upon his knees in his chamber that his whole day bore a marked resemblance to the daily life of a devout novice. His children, in their early days, wondered sometimes why, on

* Tob. xii.

rising up from the dinner-table, he never failed to bend his steps towards the Blessed Sacrament: it was the novice's prescribed custom; and why, after a prolonged absence from home, before he greeted wife or child, he betook himself to the domestic chapel to salute most humbly his Lord and Master: it was the novice's pious practice.

And as years went on he seemed to add to what would be prescribed or permitted to the fervent novice. For on that hallowed night of the week which our Blessed Saviour spent in the Garden of Gethsemani, he never failed, till the few last months of his life, to spend the midnight hour in a most fruitful meditation on the Agony of his beloved Saviour. I say a fruitful meditation, for that meditation he considered to be the well-spring of that sorrow for sin and hatred of sin which seemed so ever present to his soul. "I trust to that holy hour," I have heard him say, "for my contrition." And not even the midnight ended his prayer. For finding that his sleep was habitually broken two or three times each night by certain cramps in his limbs for which he never cared to seek a remedy, he turned these inconveniences into occasions for his favourite devotion; and as often as his rest was thus disturbed, he rose from his bed, kissing his crucifix, with the familiar words upon his lips:

Sancta Mater, istud agas;
Crucifixi fige plagas
Cordi meo valide;

and continued for some minutes a prayer in honour of his Blessed Saviour's sufferings. And as his sleep by night, so his labours by day were continually sanctified by prayer. They who

lived at his side, and had the opportunity of watching him most closely, would often notice at times least likely—in the midst of his occupations, or while he sat at table—how his heart was recollected, and his lips articulated some favourite aspiration to God. All these little circumstances of his life, when gathered together, give us some idea of the effort which this venerable man made to carry out the counsel given to us by our Blessed Saviour, that "we ought always to pray and not to fail." *

And yet they who watched the comparatively few days of what we may call his last illness could, I think, form a truer appreciation of the spirit of prayer he had acquired than could be gained by a long observation of his ordinary life. We are often reminded that we die as we live; that death is like to life; that as the Passion of Christ is a short and most impressive summary of His life, in which all the marvels of His charity are reproduced in a compressed form with a most dazzling brilliancy, so, too, it is at the death-bed of a faithful follower of Christ that you can read in letters of light a true epitome of his life. It was when we saw good habits, like love "strong as death," † that we could judge what life had been. When we witnessed the astonishing struggle which the well-disciplined soul made to conquer the prostration of the body; when we saw the dying man rise daily and try to stand on limbs that could not support him in order to be present at Holy Mass; when the only lament that the loss of his eyesight drew from him that he could no longer read his Offices and his usual prayers; when we saw peace come back as soon as he was assured that the filial

* Luke xviii. † Cant. 8.

piety of those around him would supply the place of eyesight to him, so that his prayer should not be lessened; when we noticed how, at any hour of the day or night, if he woke up from the fitful sleep that excessive weakness brought on, his soul was ready for prayer without an effort, and that prayer was the best medicine to soothe the restlessness that growing weariness produced as death came nearer; yes, it was when we came to understand that the cry so often repeated, "Help me! help me!" was an earnest request to have some one of his old familiar prayers recited, and marked how, during the four or five hours that most looked like an anxious agony, this earnest craving for prayer lasted without intermission; then it was, brethren, that any one who has known much of the secrets of the death-chamber could measure the strength of the habit of prayer formed during life. For when we hear even very good men declare how wonderfully in sickness the corruptible body does sometimes weigh down the soul, when we remember how even in the solemn moments of Christ's agony His own apostles did not struggle against the tyranny of the body, but slept when there was so much cause to pray, then we can understand the large measure of sanctity implied in those words which Holy Church makes use of in describing the death of the great St Martin: "He never suffered his unconquered soul to relax its prayer"; words often brought to my mind as I observed the struggle which the soul of this good and faithful servant maintained to conquer death and to pray always.

And as at times one or other of those who loved him and watched him entered his chamber stealthily to see if the last moment was come, and,

instead of the death-rattle which the friends of the dying expect, heard a faint voice from the death-bed uttering some complaint like this, "I have not said my rosary as yet," or, "I was not attentive and grateful enough while Benediction of the blessed Sacrament was going on in the chapel," a smile of holy pleasure stole perforce across the features more prepared for tears than for gladness; and it was impossible not to feel how truly Christ dying on the cross had conquered death and made all things new. The word that came to the heart was the triumphant word of the apostle, "O Death! where is thy victory?" What wonder that our blessed Saviour, as we were told by our venerable Metropolitan two days ago, came in the hour of need to dwell under the roof of His faithful servant, to be near by day and by night the death-bed of one whose ceaseless effort in life and death was not to be separated from his Creator.*

And now, dear brethren, I will pass on to another habit which Mr Langdale brought with him from the retirement of the noviceship. The exercises of St Ignatius have for their scope and object to teach man to regulate his life and to become thoughtful and a true image of God. The habit of careful forethought is sister to the spirit of prayer. Now those who were in a position to watch the daily life of our departed father and patriarch most narrowly assure us that his habit of careful forethought was as remarkable as his love for prayer. In his spiritual life the traces of preparation were everywhere to be seen. Others might, perhaps, approach more often to the holy

* By permission of the Holy Father Mr Langdale was allowed to have the blessed Sacrament in his house during his last illness.

table ; but very few would be more exact than he was to find abundant leisure for a reverential preparation for the sacraments. And I would not dare to say that any fervent novice was more faithful and more painstaking than he was in preparing overnight the matter for his morning meditation, so fearful was he of incurring the censure contained in the sacred word : " Before prayer prepare thy soul, and be not as one that tempts God." *

And his forethought was not all exhausted upon his spiritual concerns ; or rather, perhaps, I should say that among his spiritual concerns he classed a father's duty to look with diligence to the temporal interests of his family. Anxious as he was to spend much time in prayer, and profuse in his charity to the poor, he seemed at times to justify a suspicion in those who knew him but superficially that he might be inclined to forget what we call, incorrectly perhaps, the business of this world. But it was not at all his habit to forget the withering censure of St Paul : " If any man have not care of his own, and especially of those of his house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." † He quite well understood that the first alms which a father of a family ought to give is a fitting maintenance to his children, to enable them to fulfil the duties of their station when they have no longer a father's home to shelter them. Mr Langdale then, brethren, was well contented to be alone in his chamber, and in his hours of solitude carefully reviewed the past and the coming time, and was found ready when the hour for action had arrived, both in his spiritual life and also with regard to his temporal affairs.

* Ecclus xviii. † 1 Tim. iii.

And this habit of forethought was equally remarkable in the management of those very important questions concerning education and the rights of our Catholic poor, which from time to time were entrusted to him. In council he was "quick to hear, and slow to speak." * He was slow to approve or condemn a scheme proposed, unless his quick-sighted instinct discovered some opposition in it to faith or obedience; for then his word was rapid and decisive. And the fire and energy which burst forth at those moments rendered more remarkable his habitual freedom from hasty rashness in forming a judgement. And if I now add to what I have already said, that forethought and self-control were become so much a part of his nature that those most frequently by his side are able to attest that they would have to travel back in memory a very long distance to find the moment when they last heard him utter a harsh or injurious word against the character of a neighbour, you can see, brethren, that it is not without reason we call him a good and a venerable man, since we have the warrant of an apostle for it that if any man "offend not in word, the same is a perfect man." †

And here, brethren, let me ask whether at a moment like the present, when rapidity of movement and ceaseless activity seem to lead on almost inevitably to a scattering of the powers of the mind—when there is more than the usual danger lest the earth become with desolation desolate, "because there is no one that thinketh in his heart" ‡—it is not well worth while to call attention to this habit of careful consideration, and to point out the value of a man who has schooled his mind to forethought. Such a man

* James i. † James iii. ‡ Jer. xii.

is a treasure to those among whom he lives; and the children of this good father, and we who are in any way belonging to him, if we imitate him in his habits of thought, are sure to prove a blessing to those around us; otherwise the Spirit of God would not have uttered that advice to us: "Be always in the company of one who thinks."

I will now invite your attention, brethren, to a third habit which, along with the spirit of prayer and prudent forethought, Mr Langdale brought with him from the holy solitude of the novitiate. He was a man of a singularly mortified life. The spirit of penance abode with him till death. Self-denial had been practised during life so earnestly that a grace had at last come down on him which made him sincerely abhor all that savoured of the luxury of this world.

That his life was a life of self-conquest may be partly seen from what I have already stated; for, in the first place, the man who has arrived so far as to bridle the tongue—which St James calls "the world of iniquity, the restless evil that no man can tame"*—would be a marvellous exception if he had not subdued enemies less mighty: I mean the other appetites and passions which are less tyrannical. Then, secondly, those who are conversant with the different modes of inflicting penance on the body will, I think, agree with what Mr Langdale has often been heard to say, that, for one of a naturally drowsy habit of body, no penance could be devised so severe as the habit of breaking and curtailing sleep in which he persevered for so long a term of years.

But I have said, my brethren, that a close study of his life would suggest the idea that he

* James iii.

was always preparing himself for the moment when he should be free to renounce the world and embrace the severity of religious life; and, therefore, from the novitiate he brought to his home such instruments of penance as the fervent religious might use, to fill up in his own person, as St Paul expresses it, "what is wanting to the sufferings of Christ."* "I chastise my body and bring it into subjection," † that apostle said; and the body now lying here in the midst of us will before long rejoice exceedingly for having been thus chastised and brought into subjection. We may form some idea of the penitential habits of Mr Langdale's manhood when we are told that, now verging upon his eightieth year—the term at which even the mighty fail, accordingto the psalmist—on his arrival at the end of a long journey at the monastery of a fervent community of religious priests, he was, to their surprise and edification, overheard before retiring to rest at night chastising a body already too weak to bear its own burden. And how genuine and thorough his spirit of penance and self-denial was might be readily discovered by the earnest struggle which he maintained, and the pain he manifested whenever there was an effort made to induce him to take pity on his growing infirmities and increase his scanty allowance of sustenance. One sentence, brethren, that I well remember to have heard him utter, will be a satisfactory illustration of what I am saying. He was on the door-step of a house in which he had been working at his usual labour of love, the rescue of poor Catholic children from corruption, and he was complaining of an effort that was being made by those to whom the health of their grey-

* Coloss. i. † 1 Cor. xv.

haired father was inestimably precious, to induce him to break his long fast by allowing himself some suitable food at mid-day, when pointing to his heart, where he experienced some pain, he said: "I think there is mischief here; and I know well that my brother Edward was taken suddenly out of life, and my brother Philip also; and I know, moreover, that we are told that 'it is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God'; but still," he said, with increased energy, "upon my word, I think I would rather die as my brothers did than live to be over-indulged in my old age."*

Now, brethren, to any one who knew, first, how much Mr Langdale measured his words, and, secondly, how intensely his mind realized the Judgement to come after death, very little more than this one sentence from the old man's lips is needed to prove satisfactorily that he not only practised habitually strict penance and self-denial, but that he had arrived at that high degree of holiness in which self-indulgence becomes a torment and a terror. I will therefore only add one other instance to show how deeply this dread of indulgence and luxury was fixed in his soul.

It was the birthday of one who was, I think I may say, the oldest and dearest friend he had on earth, whose name he would often mention with evident emotion, and this friend was sitting at his table; and yet no amount of entreaty could overcome the fears of his conscience so far as to allow a cherished birthday to be solemnized in any way that savoured too much of the luxury of this world. For he could never shake off the remembrance of those words which our Saviour

* Mr Langdale's words were: "I think I would rather die than live to be coddled in my old age."

and the disciple whom our Saviour loved had uttered: "Wo to this world. Do not love this world nor the things that are in this world." *

This may seem severe and rigid, brethren; and, indeed, by many who were not intimately acquainted with the character and inward life of this remarkable and venerable man, it was sometimes thought that an absence of tenderness was the defect in his noble nature. Nor is it surprising that this impression should be left on the minds of those who knew but in part the story of his life. For since he was, as I have already said, a man of thoughtful habits, who did not act on impulse, a man of extraordinary self-control, and one who dreaded inordinate indulgence of every kind, it can be readily understood that he would not allow himself to indulge in tenderness of feeling simply as a luxury. Add to this that Mr Langdale always admired much, and advocated by word and example in society, a gentlemanly reserve and decorum. And then, lastly, let us bear in mind that he was one of those who, to use the phrase of holy Scripture, "stretched forth [his] hands to strong things." † His life was spent in a warfare, in a struggle for a great cause. He was habitually absorbed in his earnest desire to win justice for his poor brethren. From all these causes, on the surface of his life there was not much demonstration of feelings that a casual observer would notice. But to those who could watch more intimately this "hidden man of the heart," ‡ it was very evident that good and kindly and tender feelings had not been killed within him by long years of self-discipline, but, on the contrary, had, by being shut up to a certain degree, been saved from what I may call

* 1 John ii. † Prov. xxxi. ‡ 1 Pet. iii.

evaporation, and been preserved in their intensity for the occasions worthy of their activity.

I shall have to speak presently in detail of one of the strongest proofs of the humanity and kindness of his heart—I mean his demeanour towards the poor, his irrepressible compassion for them. I will only here lightly touch upon a few other facts which betrayed how much true affection lay hidden under his outward reserve and earnestness. In the first place, the singularly warm friendship which subsisted during long years between him and some of those who were intimate with him, and which was continually betrayed as often as he spoke of them or they of him, would of itself go far to prove how genial a heart his was. I scarcely know which was the more pleasant, to hear him speak so cordially and so feelingly of the friends he valued, or to hear their glowing eulogy of him. In the next place, brethren, how truly and substantially kind his heart was might easily be seen whenever there was question of the well-being and interests of his children; for it was evidently a first principle with him, that neither his passion for almsgiving, nor the gratification of any other sacred taste, should ever be allowed to prejudice the claims that every child has to be considered by the father of a family as a part of himself. The rules which the good father in the Gospel followed with regard to his son, "Whatever is mine is yours," was entirely recognized and lovingly carried out by this true and faithful father in his dealings with his family. And observe, I pray you, brethren, that these proofs of his goodness of heart are not here adduced as if this were something peculiar to him, and not found in others, but rather as an answer to an

objection, to show that there was not wanting in him a virtue which we naturally might expect to find in the soul of so good a man, but which in his case was less exposed to the eye than his other good qualities were.

But there was one manifestation of his tenderness of heart which could be observed in Mr Langdale by those intimate with him, which will be envied by many who want not sympathy for friends or family: I mean his very marked feeling for our Blessed Lord and His holy Mother. It was impossible to hear him in his old age utter those words which were often on his lips—"our Blessed Saviour," "our Blessed Lady"—without perceiving the emotion of tenderness which those names excited. And even during the extreme prostration of sickness I have marked that as soon as he woke up from the sleep caused by exhaustion, it was easy to draw tears from his eyes by an allusion to the Passion of our Lord or the sorrows of His holy Mother. The force that lies in this single fact to prove more than ordinary tenderness of heart will, I think, be readily acknowledged by those who have experienced in themselves, or witnessed in others, the strange power that sickness and pain possess to paralyse generous feelings.

I may now then, brethren, pass on to the last feature that I shall set before you of his interior life—one very strongly marked and more and more developed as time passed by and eternity came nearer. I speak of that love of poverty and lowliness which with so many other spiritual treasures Mr Langdale brought with him from the exercise of the Novitiate, and which he cherished more heartily as life advanced. Brought up in luxury, and marked in his early life by a

passionate relish for refinement, he might truly have said in his old age: "It is 'not I, but Christ living in me,' that is so unlike my former self." For great was the alteration in his tastes. There was much in the aspect of his chamber to remind one of the cell of a lay-brother. A poor candlestick, which no servant would think of offering to his master; a few well-worn prayer-books; and the devotional pictures, gathered together during long years and kept as treasures till the image was well-nigh effaced—this was not the furniture of an ordinary devout Christian gentleman; this is the cell of one in heart and desire a Novice.

And there were stronger proofs than the poverty of his chamber, of the progress which he had made in genuine love for the lowliness of his humble Master. For I think that many witnesses, well qualified to speak, would guarantee the truth of what I now say, that in his latter years he seemed to have lost the power of resenting an injury. It was not that hot blood did not run in his veins, or because he met with nothing in his course to rouse his dormant indignation; for by nature he was a man of fire and impetuosity, and in the course of his busy public life the very magnitude of the interests for which he was fighting so good a fight raised up enemies, not only in the hostile camp but among those who were fighting by his side, and were so eager to win the triumph that they quarrelled with him because success did not come quick enough. In all the accidents of such a troubled career two things were evident: first, that Mr Langdale was absorbed in the cause for which he fought; and secondly that he was not much solicitous about himself.

But if he seemed insensible to blame and reproach, he was, on the other hand, painfully sensitive at the approach of commendation. It had become a terror to him to be praised or treated with honour. A well-remembered instance occurred in the committee-room, where his word and example had done so much to cheer on and maintain the gallant struggle that secured at last for our poor in England that just and secure system of education* which Catholic Ireland wistfully looks at and clamours for till now in vain. For the admiring witnesses of his persevering labour in that good cause, presuming the rights of friendship, once begged of him in a very solemn manner to give them the comfort of having his portrait among them to cheer their labours. He could make no answer at all, but withdrew at once pained and abashed. And never till his end drew nigh and the thought of eternity was growing hourly more vivid, could any argument be found to induce him to bequeath to his children and his friends the image of that body in which his soul was imprisoned. But then at length, at the eleventh hour, humility prevailed against humility; and the promise that for every portrait given to a friend the adorable Sacrifice should be offered for the wants of his soul outweighed all his strong repugnance.

For the sense of his spiritual indigence and the necessities of his soul became, as life drew towards its close, the ruling thought. And indeed, during the whole course of a long spiritual intimacy, it was to me a very marked fact that though

* When these words were delivered, the Board Schools, with all their cruel injustice to the Catholic poor, had not as yet come in to make terrible amends to outraged bigotry and infidelity for the short-lived attempts that had been made to be just to Catholic school-children.

he was singularly docile and childlike in all that concerned his soul, yet whenever a thought was suggested that seemed to imply some commendation of his spiritual state, it could scarcely gain an entry into his mind. He seemed to writhe under an infliction and turn away his thoughts. Thus, when urged to cheer himself with the assurance that the prayers of the poor would be a sure protection to him at the judgement-seat, his answer would be: "But I have done little for the poor"; or, "I know that the prayers of the poor are all-powerful, and I should like to earn them; do you know of any case of distress that needs help?" Or else he would bemoan his hard lot that now in his sickness he had no means of knowing what the poor were suffering. But never could he bring his mind to allow that he had already deserved the grateful blessings and suffrages of Christ's friends the poor.

But if, on the other hand, some word was read or spoken to him that contained some humble avowal of sin and weakness, that word, to use an expression borrowed from St Ignatius of Loyola, would sink into his soul readily and noiselessly, as water into a sponge, without encountering any opposition. "It is good that Thou hast humbled me,"* was a word that gave him great contentment during the days that he sat deprived of his eyesight and his strength, "waiting the hour when his change should come";† and he was always glad to be reminded that now he was a helpless child again. But the infirmity of his soul seemed to him a greater reality than the uselessness of his body. "I fear," he said a little while before his death, "I am but a very poor specimen of what a Christian and a Catholic ought to be"; and "I

* Ps. cxviii. † Job xiv.

wonder," he would ask at times, "what will our Saviour say to me after death." And in a few touching lines, which he wrote to be read after his death, he conjures his family to lose no time in having the holy Sacrifice offered for "my poor and deeply responsible soul. And I need not say," he adds, "how much I desire the prayers of the charitable from all quarters."

A spirit then of deep humility was one of the most marked features of his spiritual life; and besides all the evidences of it that met the eye of ordinary friends, they who were in the secret of his thoughts were well aware during the latter years of his life that he was often in his solitary hours considering in his heart how he could escape altogether from his honourable position, and prepare himself for death in the humble position of a lay-brother in some religious house. And at last, about three years before his death, he made his formal petition to be admitted to end his days among the lay-brothers of the Society of Jesus. And although at that time he came to the conclusion, after reflection, that his duty to his family, and his duty to the family of his adoption, the poor Catholic children of England, prevented the present execution of his plans, yet when his end drew near and it was made known to him that by privilege, and in consequence of his good desire, he was permitted now to carry out his wish, and by the three nails of poverty, chastity and obedience to fasten himself to his cross and die as our Saviour died, he gladly received the welcome tidings, saying: "I cannot comprehend how so many blessings come to me." And in presence of the most Blessed Sacrament, brought to him as food for his long journey, he pronounced the religious vows of a lay-brother, and, after fighting well

the battle of his public life and discharging faithfully the duties of a father to his family, died in that humble position for which his hidden life in his chamber had been so long a preparation. After this solemn act was done, it chanced that, as he lay waiting for death, he heard this question whispered, "Does he wish his family to know what he has done?" It was not an idle question; for how many men there are who are ashamed to let even their nearest friend know those acts of piety which are their immediate preparation for eternity; and, on the other hand, how many Christian families who, in spite of the faith within them, would receive very coldly the news that their honoured father had chosen for his portion a position that the wise of this world must look upon with scorn. But it was not Mr Langdale's habit in life to shrink from avowing his faith and his worship of God; and in death he was not other than what he had been in life. His answer, therefore, to the question asked was one short and unhesitating word, "Certainly." And accordingly his family and his friends soon heard and very heartily approved this closing act of a long life; and they were well content that on the coffin of one so loved and revered and one who had well deserved many honourable titles, no other inscription should be found than this:

Charles Langdale,
Lay-Brother of the Society of Jesus

This, brethren, is the defective and incomplete picture of Mr Langdale's hidden and domestic life which I have to present to you, in the hope, as I have already said, that while we honour

him in word, we may be moved to honour him also in work and in all patience, that a blessing may come from him to us, and "the blessing may endure in the latter end." These are such fragments as one might gather up from those who were witnesses of his daily life at home. But there were long intervals during which his family could not have the pleasure of his presence among them, or even of knowing that he was near them in the domestic chapel or in the holy solitude of his chamber. There were long absences from home, during which those of his household would know very little of his words or his doings, and yet about which they would feel no anxiety, as they were quite sure he was about "his Father's business." Of those times during which Mr Langdale was actively employed in his public duties, though I can say but little, I do not think I ought to suppress that little. And if I thus detain you some moments longer, I beg of you to remember that I am speaking of a long life, and of a man whose days were full days; and that were I even to prolong my discourse till evening came, I should still probably leave unrecorded very much which we should be the better for knowing; for his public career was full of incident and edification that ought not to be lost to us. They who saw him in his place in parliament, winning by his fearless honesty respect for a cause abhorred by popular prejudice; they who sat by him in that committee-room where patiently and wisely was planned and perfected, in spite of numberless difficulties, that organization which secured for our poor children an untainted education;* they who stood by

* See note to page 41. Would that the Catholic laity would again rise up with the determined spirit of Mr Langdale to protect the Catholic poor from the curse of a godless education!

Mr Langdale at the many public meetings in which he took his part, in order to promote some work of charity—they have a story of his life to tell comparatively unknown to his own who lived with him in private. Of that portion of his life I can, as I have already observed, say but very little, and only express the wish that we may soon know more: unless, perhaps, I should rather say that the results of Mr Langdale's public life we have clearly before us in our reformatories, in our poor schools, in our prisons and workhouses, and therefore can, from the effects and the success, understand much concerning the long struggle in which he took so large a part, but would gladly know more incidents of the battle, as the few things recorded make us thirst for further knowledge.

I well remember, for instance, with what pleasure those who saw the good old man towards the end of his life preside at a public entertainment given to a venerable bishop, as untiring as himself in the cause of God and well-nigh as old, used to dwell upon the fearlessness with which he avowed his paramount loyalty to the Holy See. The post of honour on that occasion had been declined by others of high station, who deemed it wrong that even at such a gathering Christ's Vicar should be honoured more than the representatives of Cæsar. Mr Langdale at the time, from the weakness of old age and a growing love of retirement, was most averse to occupying any prominent position, but this question of precedence between Church and State made him forget at once how little strength remained either in his limbs or his voice, and, gathering up his energy, he took his place as of old, and uttered with an emphasis not easily

forgotten his fearless protest: "I am astonished that in this nineteenth century any Catholic nobleman or gentleman should hesitate to give his proper position to the Vicar of Christ."

And you will allow me also, brethren, to set before you in some detail that other incident of his public career to which some of us heard allusion made by His Grace, our venerable Archbishop, in what I may call the first part of these funeral obsequies. It was a scene in Mr Langdale's life that ought not to be forgotten in this his country. It is a tale which the Catholic parents of England might well tell to their children at the fireside. For it seems to me that if Mr Langdale had bequeathed to his family nothing else than the recollection of what took place at the great meeting in York Castle, that single reminiscence would be an heirloom of inestimable price. It was at the moment when the re-establishment of the Hierarchy in this country by the Holy Father had thrown the Protestantism of England into a frenzy which made its effects felt for a long time after; and the York meeting, like many others, was meant to be a solemn protest against the act of the Pope, which was pronounced an aggression and a usurpation.

At that meeting an English nobleman full of good intentions, and not wishing to wound the feelings of any man present, contrived in a very few words to inflict three most painful wounds in the vulnerable part of Mr Langdale's soul; for he assailed the Pope, he impugned the honour of the Mother of God, and cast a most offensive slur on the honesty and truthfulness of English Catholics. The Vicar of Christ, the Mother of Christ, the Truth which Christ is—"I am the Truth"—all these things were dear as life to our

devout and orthodox and honest patriarch. And, therefore, the noble lord, after announcing to the assembled crowd that Pope Pius had restored the Hierarchy "under the patronage of the Immaculate Mother of God and the Saints of England," went on to say that he ventured to hope the Catholics of England were too enlightened to sanction such words, and put the challenge: "I doubt whether any gentleman on these hustings would stand forward and say in words not capable of another interpretation that he believes in the patronage of the Virgin and the Saints." He whose lips are now closed in this coffin lost not an instant in giving the reply.

After reprobating therefore very discreetly the introduction of such topics in presence of a divided population, he said: "But as the noble lord has chosen to do so, I am here in the face of the population of York—almost all of you differing from me in religion—to reply to the question he has proposed to me. He asks me would any man stand up and proclaim his belief in the assistance and patronage of the Saints? Well, I am here to proclaim my belief in the patronage and protection of the Mother of God and of His Saints." And then, after the cries of disapprobation had died away, he turned to his noble benefactor, who had, without intending it, given him this golden opportunity, and said: "Have I answered the question with sufficient distinctness for the noble Earl? I ask him once more—since the noble Earl seems to think we would resort to special pleading—have I spoken plainly?" "Certainly, quite plainly," was the Earl's answer. Yes, brethren, quite plainly, thank God.

And there was not much fear that one who was so earnest and straightforward that he could

never fashion his lips to a compliment if it savoured at all of a falsehood, would answer in any other language than the plainest and most unequivocal when interests so dear to him were assailed.

Early in his lifetime he had knelt in public at the foot of the altar, and there had solemnly promised never to utter one word against the honour of the Mother of God, and never to suffer any one subject to him to dishonour her. By uttering that offensive word against the prerogative of the Mother of God, that English nobleman constrained Mr Langdale to take authority and rebuke him as if he were a subject. And the honest and upright servant of our Lady spoke as in duty bound, for he never had forgotten the promise of his childhood. And not many hours before his death, when he had no longer strength or voice to recite that promise once more, he yet found strength, and voice, and energy to answer with unmistakable heartiness when another recited it for him, Amen, amen. And, believing as I do, brethren, the doctrine expressed in the words which Holy Church puts into the mouth of our Blessed Lady, "I love them who love me," * I cannot but consider that happy chance, that grand opportunity given to this faithful man, as a great reward, a solemn pledge of future graces. To be permitted on so public a theatre to speak in defence of Christ's holy Mother! Why, brethren, it was like the privilege given to the Good Thief on Calvary to speak a word on behalf of the Son of Mary crucified; and if that word spoken on Mount Calvary drew forth the instantaneous recom-

* Prov. viii.

pense, "Thou shalt be with Me in Paradise," I venture to say that it is not too bold an imagination to figure to ourselves the Blessed Mother of Christ saying, by right of a mother's privilege accorded to her, when her servant made that confession before men in her honour, "Thou shalt be with me in Paradise." And if I knew nothing of the edifying life of Mr Langdale but this single fact, that he had grace to utter that bold word in defence of the impugned honour of the Mother of God, I never could bring myself to have much fear concerning his soul while standing beside his grave; and I wonder no more at the long series of blessings that were seen descending on his life and on his death-bed.

My brethren, we now scarcely realize the exasperation at that moment of certain classes in this country against the Pope and his adherents. It was a time of serious anxiety to those who were prominent in the Catholic body; and I have been assured by one who had the best opportunity of observing, that throughout the peril of that crisis Mr Langdale was singularly cheerful and light-hearted, and could not at times restrain himself from uttering the hope that possibly the time was come when he too, like his ancestors, might be found worthy to suffer something for the ancient faith. What wonder then that his answer was fearless and worthy of the hard times of his forefathers, when the moment came for him to confess and not to deny that he loved the Mother of God.

And now, brethren, I will beg of you to follow me through one other page in this biography; to glance for a moment at another scene, I can scarcely call it of his public life, but rather of his

life out of doors. I allude to his visits to the dwelling-places of the poor.

It was not without reason that in his last illness he bewailed that he could no longer know what was happening among his orphans and his poor widows, since now even his resolute will could not invigorate the helplessness of his limbs; and much against his inclination he was obliged at the eleventh hour to forego his regular round of visits amongst the poor. For it was only at the eleventh hour, when he was past his eightieth year, that he was no longer seen with his stick in his hand and his purse ready, going to supply such simple comforts as prove welcome to the destitute; making what speed he could in order not to disappoint the needy who expected him. And whatever he could not achieve himself of his prescribed circuit, he entrusted to confidential and willing co-operators who distributed for him his weekly alms.

Indeed, if I may allude again to the words of Ecclesiasticus, there is no portion of his life that is more like honey on the tongue and music at the banquet of wine, than the story of his dealings with the poor. "Do you remember," men say to one another, "his meetings with the beggars in the streets? how they watched and waylaid him? and how he stayed and listened and argued with them, in order to be prudent, and in the end gave way, for fear of being wanting in charity?" till men at last would complain at times that he might by his indulgence be encouraging an unworthy system of imposition, and from time to time he was chidden for his leniency. But, brethren, as I have said, he was a man of forethought, and if he was lenient to the poor it was on principle and with premedita-

tion. In fact, when the venerable old man would turn round on his advisers and answer piteously, "What can I do? She says her children have no food, and I have seen her home, which is very wretched," what rejoinder could be made? How could you satisfy a mind like his, that was utterly incapable of softening down and explaining away the morality of the Gospel? How attempt to tamper with his reverence for the rights of the poor? Or how refute the arguments of one penetrated as he was with a most painful sense of his own unworthiness, and greedy for every chance of earning grace for his hour of need, when he could point to the words which old Tobias uttered as a last counsel to his son: "Turn not away thy face from any poor person, for so it will come to pass that the Lord will not turn away His face from thee." *

Brethren, I think that those who were witnesses of Mr Langdale's abundant almsgiving ordinarily went away more wishful to imitate him themselves than to censure. God grant that many may be moved to imitate his almsgiving. For his place among the poor is empty. His soul was but an hour or two gone from this world when a bishop, himself deservedly venerated, took up his pen and wrote the thought that at once started to his mind when the news arrived that Mr Langdale was dead: "Alas! who will now take care of our poor and afflicted?" And I think it no shame to place beside a bishop's evidence the word of a poor man, one belonging to a class from whom we do not expect much sentiment. It was but a few nights before the death of this good father of the poor that a cabman, employed by chance to carry

* Tob. iv.

a stranger to Mr Langdale's door, asked, "Is the old gentleman who lives here very sick?" and on being answered that his end was near, he burst into tears, saying, "He was a father to many poor families." This poor man was but the spokesman of a large multitude of poor; and the bishop only uttered the thought of the clergy and the Catholic gentry.

Surely, brethren, the voice of the people in this case is the voice of God. The beloved of the poor is the beloved of God. And if that word of Zaccheus: "Half of my goods I give to the poor," * earned him such a blessing when he and our Blessed Saviour met for the first time, what, think you, was the meeting between this humble lay-brother, this friend of the widow and the orphan, and our Blessed Lord, when the soul obeyed the injunction, "Go forth, the Bridegroom cometh!" Was not the prayer of Holy Church heard and granted? "May our Blessed Lord meet thee with a meek and festive countenance." When His Guardian Angel testified, "Half of his goods he gave to the poor," would the eye of our Saviour rest any more on the imperfections into which even the just man falls? or would He not rather say at once, "Come, good and faithful servant, you did it to Me"? †

And now, brethren, I will finish. I had scarcely any need to say so much of his pity for the poor, for with your own eyes you have witnessed a scene that tells more concerning his charity than all I have recorded. It was past the hour of midnight, and the festival of our Lady's Immaculate Conception had already commenced, when by torchlight last night we brought the remains of this good father back to

* Luke xix. † Matt. xxv.

his old familiar domestic chapel; and round his coffin came in his children, strangers in their own home. Why had they been exiles, brethren? Why this long journey to reach their home with the bones of their aged father? Because nine years ago he heard from this secluded home the voice of the orphan, and the widow, and the prisoner, and the workhouse pauper calling loudly for help; and at their call he bade farewell to this well-loved home of his family, and asked his children too to make this sacrifice of home and its comforts and its dear associations, that, under the protection of Mary Immaculate, he might go and spend the last years of his life in a struggle for the protection of the poor, and more especially of innocent children, in the centre of our Metropolis, that great wilderness of misery, that vast Babylon to which the ships of the world come freighted with luxury, with vice, with sorrow and with ruin. My brethren, it was well and rightly ordered that in the centre of that Babylon the obsequies of Mr Langdale were celebrated with the image of Mary Immaculate looking down upon his bier and his modest funeral, and were commingled with the preparations for her great festival. And it is well that his anointed body reposed here yesterday on the feast of her Immaculate Conception; for he was a true servant of Mary Immaculate, and his favourite work of charity was to rescue children from corruption, in honour of her in whom there was no stain.

I have only now to add once more, my brethren, that this is no idle catalogue of his virtues. It is a grace of our life to stand beside this coffin and remember the words and the deeds of this venerable father. What sermon

touches us so much as the model we find in a man, weak as ourselves? Was not the Word of God to His people of old: "Look unto the rock from which you are hewn: look unto Abraham your father"?* Is it too much to hope that, though his lips are silent now, yet from his coffin he will speak to us a word that we shall not forget? "Yesterday for me, to-day for you." † I do not mean, exactly, to remind us that yesterday he died and we must soon follow; but rather that yesterday he was living, yesterday he was in his manhood, with our passions within him and our world around him; yesterday he was fighting the battle for his eternity, yesterday he was making his choice between Christ Jesus and Lucifer. To-day we have this same work to do. This is our day of chances and opportunities for winning eternal crowns. Is it too much to hope that the image of this good man, this true father, this friend of the poor, this man of prayer, this penitent, this lay-brother—yes, and this manly, fearless, chivalrous Catholic gentleman—may remain with us for our time of need? Shall not his child be nerved to high thoughts and worthy deeds by the holy magic of these words: "What would my father have done?" Shall not the sodalist remember Mr Langdale and be glad and more glad to be the servant of our Lady? Shall not the image of his grey hairs before the altar, and his wasted form, shame our cowardice into perseverance in the necessary amount of prayer and penance? And the young Catholic gentlemen who soon must lead the battle in this country when their fathers go to their eternal rest, will they not remember, and never forget, that they can win an honoured position and

* Is. li. † Ecclus xxxviii.

maintain it, as Mr Langdale did, not by licking the dust in presence of a tyrannical world; not by cringing before false principles, but by an honest confession of faith and by consistency? Lastly, brethren, will not the recollection of this man, so blessed in life and death, convince us all of the wisdom of making friends of the poor of Christ?

Now, my brethren, our last task is to carry this anointed body of our departed father and friend to its consecrated resting-place, where it will not lie hopeless, but in peace, uttering still from the grave the motto of his family: "After darkness I hope for light."* "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in the last day I am to rise again from the earth, and I shall see my Saviour. This, my hope, is safely laid up in my heart."† And as we make our journey to his grave, though the memory of his virtues be sweet as the perfume made by the skilful hand, still shall we not forget that he who helped so many may even now be crying to us in the words of his death-bed, "Help me! help me!" His soul, then, will not be forgotten, but well remembered; and along with our prayers for him, which may or may not be needed, for our souls we will offer up a prayer which most certainly is needed, that we may honour this good father in work as well as in word, and in all patience, so that a blessing may come from him to us, and that the blessing may endure in the latter days.

R. I. P.

Kind reader, pray for his soul and the souls of all the Faithful departed.

* Job xvii. † Job xix.

APPENDIX I.—Sir Edward Vavasour and the Good Lady Stourton

Mr Langdale, till he came into possession of the Houghton estate left to him by a Mr Langdale, cousin to his mother, was the Honourable Charles Stourton, third son of the sixteenth Lord Stourton. During his father's lifetime the family property in the north of England had largely increased. "He that hath," our Lord said, "to him shall be given, and he shall abound." * His words prove true both in the natural order and the supernatural. In the natural order, men who have already a certain store of wealth have chances and opportunities of increase not given to their poorer neighbours. In the supernatural order, the more grace one has, the more easy it becomes to co-operate, and thus win five or ten talents more. In the case of the old Catholic and noble family of which I am speaking, the blessing of heaven brought an increase of both spiritual and temporal gifts. With the good things of this world came in good measure a Catholic spirit worthy of the men of former days who had saved the spark of faith from being extinguished in this country.

This Lord Stourton married in 1775 a Miss Langdale, who was the sole survivor of three sisters and the heiress to considerable property. She brought the Holme estate and Draycott estate to the Stourton family. Later on, Sir Thomas Vavasour left his estate of Hazlewood to

* Matt. xiii.

his godson Edward Marmaduke, the second son of Lord Stourton, who thereupon assumed the name of Vavasour, and became in time, by a grant from the Crown, Sir Edward Vavasour, Bart. Subsequently, about the year 1815, as I have already mentioned, a cousin of Lady Stourton, a Mr Langdale, left to Lord Stourton's third son Charles his property of Houghton. With this estate Charles Stourton took the name of his benefactor and became well known as the Honourable Charles Langdale. I am right then in saying that the substance of this earth came back in good measure to the family. God also gave them higher and better gifts. In 1794 we find Lord Stourton behaving with much charity to the nuns of the Holy Sepulchre, who had just been driven out of Liége by the French revolutionists. They had suffered much since their landing in England, not being able to find a home in which to settle. Lord Stourton offered them Holme Hall till such time as they could find a more suitable abode, and much regretted that he had not more time to put it in good repair for them, as it had not been occupied for some years. The nuns remained there for two years, from October 1794 to October 1796, and Lord Stourton added to his other kindnesses by promising that as soon as they should find a permanent home he would pay the first year's rent for them.

His wife, Lady Stourton, was the daughter of the last Catholic Lord Langdale, and inherited from him, as I have said, the Holme estate and Draycott estate. She had been most carefully brought up, and from the accounts given by those who remember her was the very type of a high-born Catholic lady. It used to be said

that when the Relief Bill was passed and the long ostracized Catholic peers entered for the first time the House of Lords, their noble bearing fixed all eyes upon them; and afterwards the belief was very prevalent through the upper circles in this country that the Catholic nobility and gentry and their families, though under the ban, were remarkable for courtesy and refinement and dignity. This prevalent belief had not died out as late as twenty-five or thirty years ago, for I remember being told by a noble lady who had been received into the Church, and who by her position and character could take her place among the foremost, that some of her friends had said to her in the bitterness of their heart that she had only become a Catholic to get the *entrée* into the select Catholic families. This idea, however, of the upper class of Catholics was not found everywhere, for on the other hand I remember being told by another convert, now a priest, that the taunt cast in his teeth by his Protestant relatives, was: "You don't know what you are doing. You have joined a set of men that cannot write a grammatical sentence." Midway, perhaps, between these two extreme pictures lay the truth.

It seems, however, that Lady Stourton, Mr Langdale's mother, was one who knew how to combine great courtesy and kindness and great cheerfulness with a prudent reserve and a remarkable dignity, which secured for her reverence and veneration from those who loved her, and they were many. After the death of her husband she lived for some years with her second son, Sir Edward Vavasour, at Hazlewood Castle; for Sir Edward became a widower early in life—his wife having died very soon after giving birth

to her eighth child, the late respected and beloved Canon Vavasour—and seeing his young family around him, he begged his mother, the good Lady Stourton, as she was called, to come and manage his household for him.

She brought her own retinue of servants with her, so that the household at Hazlewood became a large one, and her management is described by those who remember her as most orderly. Her presence rendered Hazlewood the favourite resort of a large body of relatives. It often happened that all her four sons were there together, Lord Stourton, Mr Langdale, Mr Philip Stourton and Sir Edward Vavasour. They were all very united brothers, and their reverence and affection for their mother was a constant source of gratification and edification to the numerous relatives who witnessed it. Lady Stourton's good sense always gave great weight to her opinions, so that even on matters of business and public and political questions Mr Langdale and her other sons were in the habit of consulting her. I have already said that she knew how to be reserved and dignified when there was need, but at the same time she had heartily adopted that counsel of the Holy Ghost, "Make thyself affable to the congregation of the poor."* One of Sir Edward's children still living remembers how a poor woman who came in great distress to the Hall was by Lady Stourton's orders shown up to the breakfast-room, and there by her and Sir Edward compelled to sit down and have a good breakfast with the family. Besides the plentiful alms she distributed round about her house, she had one or two trusted agents in London to find out cases of distress for

* Ecclus iv.

her and to distribute the relief she sent.* Sir Edward went heartily with his mother in this love of the poor. Hazlewood became a favourite resort—I may say a home—for the poor Irish who came over; for they used to pitch their tents in corners of the estate. Sir Edward often watched with complacency from his window their arguments with his old butler. Not unfrequently when he told his servant to find some clothes to be given to them, the answer was: "There is nothing left in your room to give away." Something however had to be found—for "where there is a will, there is a way." Besides his other modes of giving alms, of which we shall see more presently, it was his custom for many years to go every Sunday to the poor schools to teach the children catechism. Hazlewood was thus, notwithstanding the work done by death and sickness, a happy and a blessed home.

Sir Edward, however, like his brother Mr Langdale, leaned rather to strictness in the education of his children than to over-indulgence. Some of Mr Langdale's children still remembered how in the height of summer, when they craved for a drink of water, it was measured to them in a wine-class and they were required to exercise self-control. Generous as Sir Edward was to the poor, and largely hospitable in entertaining his friends, he was always severe with his children in repressing waste—even to one lucifer match. In his own conduct he adopted a high

* A near relative writes of the Good Lady Stourton: "She was the centre of immense happiness and goodness for many years at Hazlewood. I well remember the fascination and veneration of which she was the object among those of her family who were her intimates, in consequence of her sweet and gracious manners and singular perfection of character and mind.

standard, and his great ambition was to find high thoughts in his children. When they were young, he disliked much to hear them highly complimented or flattered by visitors, who were frequently Protestants. He would often whisper a word which the children were not supposed to hear, to tell his guest how much he dreaded the growth of self-conceit or vanity in them. For the same reason he did not care to have their portraits taken, and he was particularly watchful as to the companions with whom his daughters consorted,* and did not like to see them indulging in prolonged conversations even with their cousins unless at the same time they were employed in some needlework for the poor or other useful objects. Though he was thus particular about their intercourse with friends and acquaintances, he very much encouraged them as they grew up to visit the poor and the sick in their own houses and to give them relief.

His children were all brought up with a share of his own great reverence for the Holy Mass and the Blessed Sacrament. He was proud that his old church at Hazlewood which joined the Castle had never been desecrated, and that there had been no period during the persecution days when the Holy Sacrifice was not offered up upon its altar. It never entered into the minds of his children that they would be allowed to absent themselves from the daily Mass; and they were all, moreover, expected to visit the Blessed Sacrament once at least every day. Marcia Lady Herries used often in after-life to confess in her simple and laughing style how she used

* What would he have said if asked to permit his daughters to accept a modern invitation to a ball or dance at which *there are to be only young people without chaperones?*

to rebel in her childhood against all her father's efforts to make her pious; but all who knew her in later years well remember what fruits the early training bore, and with what energy she afterwards strove to inspire into her children the veneration for Holy Mass and the Blessed Eucharist which she had learned from her father.* Besides the Mass and visit to the Blessed Sacrament, there were other family devotions at Hazlewood. The Rosary was said every day by the whole household, and some of the surviving children still remember how the four brothers, their father and his brothers, used often to break off promptly a pleasant animated discussion, in which Mr Philip Stourton was frequently taking the wrong side to keep up life, as soon as the bell for Rosary was heard.

Moreover, other devotions were added. In Lent the Seven Penitential Psalms and the Litanies of the Saints were said every evening some time after dinner. And Sir Edward himself, when he had no company to dinner, always in the drawing-room took out his Bible to read a chapter in silence. If sometimes he fell asleep in so doing, he used when he awoke to quote the saying: "Let the Scripture receive thy declining head." Besides these family and public devotional exercises, which were more or less public, every morning he rose early and devoted one or two hours to mental and vocal prayer before Mass; and his children have never forgotten the care with which he seemed to prepare himself for Holy Communion, and the reverence

* Some of Sir Edward's children remember still with admiration that their father, as soon as he arrived at an hotel on the Continent, always went out to find out the Catholic churches and the hours of Mass, and came back in high spirits to tell the fruits of his researches.

with which he went to the altar to receive, and the devotion which lit up his countenance during the thanksgiving; and how he often remained to a great degree abstracted for a time during breakfast. His recollection in prayer was often so absorbing that, if visitors chanced to call when he was before the Blessed Sacrament, his children found it sometimes difficult to make him understand that he was wanted; but when he came to himself he was all cordiality to his guests.

Not unfrequently on these occasions tears were seen falling from his eyes. At this his family were not surprised, for they knew that he had two great sorrows ever present to his mind. The first was the early death of his wife, to whom he was most deeply attached, as she was also to him. When he married her she was a Protestant; but in due time the persuasive power of his good example had its effect. She had herself carefully instructed and became a pious Catholic wife, worthy of her good husband.* This was to him a crowning happiness; and, to add to his consolation, his wife's father, Mr Lane Fox, so far from resenting her change of belief, as so many families have done, seeing the good-

* Sir Thomas Vavasour, the cousin and godfather of Sir Edward, who afterwards left him the Hazlewood estate, announced the good news in a letter to the Rev. Mr Talbot of Catterick as follows:

"Hazlewood, April 15, 1814.

"My dear Sir,—It is with sincere joy I inform you that the pious and exemplary conduct of my cousin Edward Stourton has, *Deo adjuvante*, made an effectual impression on his wife's mind. She has renounced the Protestant faith, after a serious study and through conviction of the truth of our religion. . . . Her most tender parents have accepted her determination with loving kindness, and encourage her to follow her husband's religion. . . .

"Hoping to see you soon, I remain yours truly,

"Thos. Vavasour.'

ness of Sir Edward, cordially approved of what she had done, and said to her: "You cannot do better than embrace the religion of such a husband." These happy days of sunshine were soon to end. She fell into a decline, and was ordered by her physician to Bath, where she very soon died a holy death, fortified by all the sacraments of the Church.

On the top of this great sorrow soon follo another. His eldest son, called after him Edward, was a young man of exceptional promise. At the College of Stonyhurst he had studied well and carried off many prizes; and his sister, a consecrated nun, writing fifty years later, tells how she used to dread lest success might make him conceited and vain; but when she suggested her fear to him, he assured her that his one wish was for the glory of God. He inherited a large share of his father's piety, and also his handsome features and winning manner; and the same sister remembers with what a happy pride they used to look at him as he walked on the sands at Scarborough. This dear youth had gone to Rome to have the blessing of the Holy Father, and from Rome he brought back fever, which terminated in incurable disease of the brain. The tender-hearted and most loving father could never shake off the remembrance of this beloved son. It was the thought of him and his own departed wife that so often brought tears to his eyes, and obliged him to go so continually to find comfort and strength in prayer.

Still, even after this second affliction, he would, when it was a duty, rouse himself to take part in entertaining others, and he would be for the time something of his former self. For in his bachelor days and the first years of his married

life he was a most genial companion in the hunting-field and in fishing parties, as well as in the drawing-room. Even then, however, chances occurred which revealed to his friends that sport was not his ruling passion. His surviving daughter still remembers how on one occasion he was following Lord Harewood's hounds, which were in full chase, when the persecuted fox took refuge in the old cemetery attached to Hazlewood Church; and though many of the hunting party belonged to the Protestant gentry of Yorkshire, Sir Edward at once drew the line and was peremptory that the cemetery must not be profaned. The sportsmen had consequently to bear a disappointment. They knew there was no good in urging, as they said: "Vavasour always means what he says." Such firm and fearless professions of the faith were not few or far between. It is still remembered with admiration how on one occasion, as he entered a room filled with a mixed company, some of them but little known to him, he heard the Angelus bell ring from some adjacent church or convent chapel, and immediately, before all present, knelt down to honour our Lord and our Lady. His life was so consistent, he was evidently a just man living by faith, that even those who had none of his religious convictions admired him and loved him, and were quite sure that one so genial, if ever he gave pain, did it with pain to himself, and only through a strict sense of duty.

His sister had married a Protestant gentleman, Mr Bland, and naturally had many difficulties in her home arising out of two conflicting religions. One of the children of that mixed marriage wrote half a century later: "My ever loved and admired uncle and godfather was to

his beloved sister in her hours of affliction the dearest and wisest and holiest of friends—brother, counsellor, I might almost say director, all combined. My Catholic mother's position in a Protestant home—though it was a wonderfully happy one—was necessarily isolated, and would naturally in those days have wanted many spiritual helps which one might find in our times. It was, I believe, through the efforts of my uncle, Sir Edward, that she was allowed the great consolation of having the Blessed Sacrament in the little oratory which she had in her house."

At Kippax, the home of his sister, Mrs Bland, where the company would often be largely composed of Protestant gentlemen and ladies, Sir Edward was as popular and as much sought for as in the gatherings at his own home, where he was surrounded by his Catholic nephews and nieces. Of these there was a large number; for besides the sisters of his three brothers, Lord Stourton, Mr Langdale, and Mr Philip Stourton, and his sister, Mrs Bland, he had two other sisters married to Catholic husbands: Mrs Weld, married to Joseph Weld of Lulworth (of whom I speak elsewhere as the Old Commodore), and Mrs Middleton of Stockheld, who was also the mother of a large family. As a young married man, I have already said, Sir Edward was inclined to strictness in bringing up his children. As years rolled on, however, his sorrows and his continual intercourse with the Heart of our Lord in prayer appeared to soften and mellow whatever was severe in his nature. "So that when his children were grown up"—so writes a near relative, often an eye-witness of what passed—"there were few fathers so anxious to promote

every kind of amusement and gatherings of loving relatives; and what had seemed to us young ones the gloomy part of his sanctity appeared now to clear away, and its sweetness to show through more and more."

He was by nature musical,* and could heartily enjoy drawing-room entertainments as well as field-sports. When, therefore, writes the same relative, "as often happened, a party of his nieces rode over to visit Hazlewood, or were on a visit there with him and his angelic mother (the Good Lady Stourton), there broke out the sunniest of welcomes. I quite remember the peculiar gentleness of his courtesy in the drawing-room that was most fascinating, and had at the same time a ring of paternal sweetness and friendship. He was eminently what the French call *charmant*. But this was in social hours only. At his own home, when alone with his family, there was more often the expression of a soul absorbed in the sadness of life and a holy abstraction in things above, which at times impressed the younger members of the family with awe.

What wonder that Sir Edward could not find "peace in his possessions,"† but was constrained to take refuge in another world, there to find strength and courage for the work he had still to do on earth? Two heavy crosses, two messengers from God, had come to impress upon his soul that great truth: "We have not

* When his children were young and he was now acting as father and mother to them, he never failed to take a walk with them on Sundays; and their great delight was to make him at other times walk up and down with them in the hall singing a favourite song.

† Ecclus xli.

here a lasting city, but seek that which is to come."*

To complete this picture of a good and remarkable man, I will add that he was admitted by all who knew him to be a good man of business. In the management of his mother's property and his own he was thoroughly successful, because he was conscientious and painstaking. Not content with having the services of a competent and trusty steward, he took care to make himself very well acquainted with the condition of the farms, and saw that the accounts were carefully kept.

And now we come to what I may call the last act of the drama, the closing scenes of his life on earth. About the year 1840 he met for the first time Dr Gentili, who was lately come to England and was giving missions throughout England with great fruit. Sir Edward was much struck by his piety and zeal, and invited him to give a mission in his church at Hazlewood. At the time appointed Dr Gentili arrived, and while his zealous *confrère*, Father Furniss, preached in a neighbouring church, he conducted the mission or retreat at Hazlewood. Several of Sir Edward's relations came from other parts to stay at Hazlewood during the mission, in order to have the benefit of Dr Gentili's sermons. This retreat or mission was long looked back to by the family as a time of great grace. If I mistake not, Marcia Lady Herries used to say that her soul's conversion dated from that mission. It was then that Sir Edward's two unmarried daughters made up their minds to consecrate themselves to God in religious life; and to crown Sir Edward's

* Heb. xiii, 14.

happiness, his second son, William, who had lately married Constance, a daughter of Lord Clifford, followed these holy exercises with great fervour, and was so moved by them that when one of his sisters came into his room and found him on his knees, he could only beg of her to help him to return thanks to God for the great grace.

Shortly after, therefore, Sir Edward conducted his daughter Mary to Nottingham, where she entered the Convent of Mercy. There she won the hearts of all her sisters in religion and of the poor by her never-failing charity and humility. She lived to be Mistress of Novices, and it was while she exercised that office that one of her relatives paid her a visit, and asked her what her work in the convent was. She answered promptly and cheerily: "My work is to do anything I am told, from scrubbing a candlestick to cleaning a pair of shoes." Her sisters in the convent bear testimony that in these words she gave a very true account of her life.

Soon after Sir Edward's return home, his only remaining daughter, after a long struggle as to whether she ought to leave him, and after taking prudent advice from wise friends, wrote him a letter, for she could not speak it, announcing to him that she also desired to consecrate herself to God in the religious state. He read the letter, and when he met her threw his arms round her and embraced her with much affection, and said to her: "Now I can tell you my secret—of which I could not speak till now—that I too wish, before I die, to consecrate myself to God in a Religious Order."

This was no sudden fit of fervour on his part. His plan had been long working in his mind;

but so long as he had any daughter unsettled, he saw that his duty was to be with her and to be a father to her. Still all the while he had been reflecting and praying for light and grace. At that time he, as well as Mr Langdale and Lord Herries, had taken a great interest in the education of poor Catholic children. Sir Edward had given a piece of land—on which the Market Weighton Reformatory now stands—with a view to the foundation of a central training school that was to provide competent schoolmasters for the Catholic poor schools, and he had resolved to put himself and a certain sum of money at the disposal of the bishop, Dr Briggs, in order to work out this charitable scheme. He had conferred with his lordship on the subject, and considered himself now as engaged to the bishop for this work.

In due time he conducted his only remaining daughter to the Convent of the Sisters of Providence, near Loughborough, where he met with Dr Pagani, whose religious and holy conversation very greatly impressed him, as we see by his letters.

There he left his daughter, his heart full of yearning that she might become most holy. For all through his married life his zeal for the sanctification of his children never flagged, and this last daughter, having been in the end his only companion and the confidant of his secret, was become doubly dear to him. His hope was always that their standard would be a high one. One effect was that in their early days the children rather dreaded the sermons, as they called them, preached by their father. As they grew older, they learned more and more the value of so true a father. He was in great joy to

see his remaining daughter safe within her convent, but he thought that he detected in her manner and words some signs of the depression for which the Holy Spirit warns all novices to be ready: "Son, coming to the service of God, prepare thy soul for temptation." * Two days, therefore, after he left her in the convent, on August 17, 1846, he wrote to her as follows:

"I am fully aware that the first impression of your convent was not favourable; but I hope that time has or will alter this impression. God, in His wisdom, directs all things for the best to His faithful servants. Some are led through the Garden of Eden to Mount Calvary. Others from Gethsemani and Calvary to an Eden of delight on earth. With Mary [her sister] He seems to have dealt in the first way; but her Calvary, be assured, has to be traversed if she be a real favourite of heaven. And if your religious life has begun with your suffering Jesus, do not fear but that sooner or later, in His good time, the Garden of delights and peace will be your reward."

This letter was written more than forty-two years ago, and the prayers of this good father which accompanied his words have no doubt helped this cherished daughter to follow the advice of the Holy Ghost, "Do not make haste in time of clouds," † for she is still persevering in her holy vocation, full of veneration and full of love for the devoted father who by word and example and by his prayers helped her forward to holiness.

Having thus seen his daughter safe, he began to make his own arrangements. To his newly-married son he made over the care and manage-

* Ecclus ii, 1. † Ecclus ii.

ment of Hazlewood and the property, and he was to consider himself the steward of his eldest brother disabled by illness. Then in the next place certain sums of money which he held during life, and which were to go to his daughters after death, he made haste to hand over to them at once.

He announces this arrangement to his nun at Loughborough in a letter dated Paris, February 1, 1847:

"I am sorry to trespass with worldly affairs on your Lenten hours, dedicated, I dare say, to the better part you have been called to, but I wish to inform you that I have lodged to your account at Coutts' ——, which is in discharge of that sum to which you would be entitled by your Aunt Lizzie's will on my death, up to which date I was to have the benefit of it; but which I give up, and as I now pay the money, it is, therefore, at your disposal. I have done the same to Marcia [Lady Herries] and Mary [his other nun]. You need not trouble to write about it, if letter-writing is out of order in Lent. Later you may give me an acknowledgement of it. I hope you will not forget St Francis Xavier's novena, beginning on the 4th of March, and ask the prayers of the community for my usual intention —your Uncle Bland and family, to which you may add your cousin. I am going on Tuesday to the house of the Jesuits here for a few days' retreat. Let me have yours and your friends' prayers. I hope Dr Pagani received my letter. My best regards to him. When you see him, ask his prayers for me.

"Your ever very affectionate father,

"Ed. M. Vavasour."

There are several points in this letter which deserve a word. In the first place, it is dated from Paris. Sir Edward had already bidden farewell to his home, and was on his way towards religious life. As far as I can gather from his letters, he was in some doubt as to the Order he should enter. At one time he seems to have been very much attracted to Dr Pagani and the Order of Charity, and expresses great delight to his daughter at having been allowed to occupy a cell and to take his meals with the community. On the other hand he considered himself engaged to Dr Briggs, and that his future was at his bishop's disposal. This we see from a letter written a month later, on December 30, 1846. It is written to Lucy Lady Stourton, the wife of his nephew, and when he writes Christmas thoughts are still in his mind.

"My very dear Lucy,—The last year has been an important one for us both. What the coming one may be the All-disposer alone knows; and we may be content to leave it in His hands. Peace to men of good will! was the happy promise brought on earth by its new-born Saviour. . . . In a good will then we have the word of truth that men may possess this inestimable treasure; and I trust it will never be found wanting in us. . . . My life here is a very happy one, and I would willingly make it my resting-place. But it is not to be so, and I have placed my futurity a good deal at Dr Briggs' disposal."

Bishop Briggs was to decide how he could be most useful in promoting the work of providing well-trained masters for Catholic poor schools.

One thing is evident from his letter at this time, that from the day when he bade farewell to Hazlewood, and set out on his wanderings in search of a monastic house, the cloud of sadness very much cleared away. His letters to his nun daughter and others are bright and even jocose at times, and always very affectionate, so that he had a good right to style himself "ever your very affectionate father." In one of his letters to his nun, written shortly before he left England, he writes: "I have to-day had an invite to meet Conny and Willie [his daughter-in-law and his second son] at Derby, on Tuesday, where they have ordered a goose for their Michaelmas dinner. I must go to help them to eat it, by way of economy against this extravagance of theirs." This joke came out of the buoyancy of his heart at the time. His affection for his children and his delight in seeing them happy was a stronger attraction than the flavour of the Michaelmas goose. For many years he had been in exceptionally delicate health. The doctors considered that he was suffering from ossification of the heart. Sometimes when walking up a hill a paroxysm of pain came on him from which the eye-witnesses did not expect to see him rally. He was consequently never allowed to fast or abstain; but by rigidly adhering to one or two plain dishes at dinner, and at breakfast to bread and butter and one egg, without any luncheon between dinner and breakfast, he made his whole life a life of abstinence, and to supply still further for fasting added often in the early morning the use of a discipline to his long prayers.

In this same letter to his daughter we find another joke. He had already told her how he was preparing to end his days as a brother in

religious life, and now he adds: "On Michaelmas we shall be (how odd!) about equal distance from you both [his two nuns]. I shall not forget you. Let us, my dear N——, keep ourselves united with God, who being all happiness, even our absence from each other will thus be happiness in Him. To you, already entered on the path of an interior life, this will be intelligible. For I understand the interior life to mean one separated from externals and united interiorly with God in love and desire." After this effusion he adds: "Am I not writing like a brother?"

In the letter from Paris on which I am commenting, we notice also that he speaks of making a few days' retreat with the Jesuits. This had been his habit for many years. In common with his brother, Mr Langdale, his brother-in-law, Mr Middleton, his son-in-law, Lord Herries, and Lord Herries' three brothers, and others, he had formed the habit of spending frequently eight days in retreat. Hodder was then the favourite place of retirement, and Father Thomas Brownbill the venerable director of the retreats. How manifest the fruits of these retreats were in the private and public life of these Catholic noblemen and gentlemen I need not here stop to demonstrate.

In Paris he took up his abode in the Faubourg St Martin, at the head house of the Christian Brothers. His object in so doing he explains in a letter to his daughter dated November 17, 1846.

"The above direction is my present abode. It is the superior convent of the Brothers of the Christian Schools here, where I have taken up my quarters for some time to enable me to

acquire some information as to their system for our good bishop for the purpose of his new monastery" (at Market Weighton, which was not then devoted to its present use as a reformatory). "Thus for the present I may call myself a religious, and I feel so well content with the trial of a few days that a vocation may ensue."

Then he goes on to speak of the day of her clothing. He had at one time expected to be present at it, as he had been at her sister's, for in September he writes to her: "I was busy on Tuesday at a clothing, Miss Bowden's, at Caverswall. I really shall be so *au fait* at this business before your turn comes that I think I must be allowed to act as master of ceremonies." However, he did not allow himself this gratification, for he was eager to be "about his Father's business." He had to wait in England till the return of Bishop Briggs, who was absent in Ireland, as he wished to confer with him. He spent the interval in what he calls a "delightful retirement" with the Rev. Mr Dunn, his chaplain at Draycott Manor, and during the interval made a journey to Derbyshire, to assist at the opening of the College of Mount St Mary's. He also paid a farewell visit to his two nuns, and in a pleasant letter describes one of them, the Sister of Mercy, acting as acolyte, and being "quite as tall as the candles she was lighting." At Ratcliffe, he writes, he is already called one of the brothers, but complains that he is not considered perfect enough to be allowed a real proper cell.

Now, early in November, having seen his bishop, he hurried away to his work in Paris; but as the day of her clothing draws near, he is in spirit with his beloved daughter.

"I suppose," he writes, "this will reach you about the day of your own clothing. May it be favoured with God's special blessing; and may she on whose feast it will take place take your religious perfection under her particular protection. How strange! Mary a few months ago leads the way: you follow, my dear N——; and here I am myself within a convent wall, with the world in all its most vitiated and seductive form [Paris] around me. *Grâces au bon Dieu!* I feel not the slightest inclination for any share in them. You may well write that happily Providence has care for us all; and no one has more reason to be thankful for its dispensations in his regard than myself. . . . And now adieu, my dear N——. I hope to communicate on Saturday, November 21, and you shall have my best prayers that God may bless and protect you and make you worthy of the calling to which He has chosen you.

"Your very affectionate Father."

Two days later, November 19, he writes again:

"I quite forgot, in all my letters relating to the important ceremony of Saturday, to mention that of course your wedding attire must be at my charge. Indeed, I hope you have arranged that it should be so, and place the necessary purchases in some worldly hands whence the bill will reach me. I now send a cheque which also ought to have been sent before. I placed the same sum in Mary's hands on a like occasion to furnish the *Fête de la Table*, which, though it may be less required at Loughborough than at Nottingham, has the same claim on me. I dare

say Sisters of Providence will find use for the cheque as well as Sisters of Mercy.

"I suppose you will not receive this till a day or two after the novice has been duly initiated. I trust the offering will be accepted in due form, when you are made worthy of the hand of the heavenly Spouse you have chosen.* And may the Mother of Him, your chosen one, watch over your progress to that perfection which I am sure you will make it your aim to attain for His sake. I am here in the midst of a most saintly community, which calls for my best endeavours also in the work of my sanctification. May God bless you, my dear N——.

"I am your very affectionate father,

"E. V."

In all Sir Edward's money dealings with his novice we notice a spirit of affectionate liberality. He is a cheerful giver. Parents are not always so in similar circumstances. A novice sometimes, when dowers come to be settled, learns by experience the truth of our Lord's words: "A man's enemies are those of his household."† If a novice takes into a convent or a monastery "the portion of substance that falleth" to her or him, it not unfrequently happens that there is a rising of the famiiy or clan to protest loudly against such a gross abuse, as they call it. And if not the very words, the substance of the words used by one since become most unhappily notorious, are again and again re-echoed: *Ut quid perditio hæc?*—"Why this waste?"‡—and wise priests and learned doctors are called in to go

* The clothing day is the day of betrothal; the day of the vows, which come later, is the wedding-day.

† Matt. x, 36. ‡ Matt. xxvi,

and interview the novice and prove to her, or him, out of Scripture and tradition and the holy Fathers of the Church, that the scandal will be enormous and irreparable if he or she do not distribute among relations, say nine-tenths or eight-tenths of his or her inheritance. For this is, of course, what alone engrosses the mind of the aggrieved family—*the scandal!* What are they for base lucre? Their motives are pure as the morning light. It is *the scandal*, *the awful scandal*, that must spread abroad to the very ends of the earth among Protestants as well as Catholics, when once they get to know this hideous tale of conventual rapacity: how the nuns or monks actually refuse to forbid the novice to retain for works of charity the money which might enable brothers and sisters in the world to keep a two-horse carriage instead of a one-horse brougham! besides having a house in London for the season, which they otherwise must forego: and a trip to the Paris Exhibition! Zealous, righteous relatives, when the Lord of Glory comes to judge, by what name will He call you? Is there any fear of His saying to you: "Ye hypocrites! if you wish monks and nuns to be generous and disinterested, why not teach them by example? Ye hypocrites! If it is so wicked in the novice to keep what is her own in order to spend it on our Lord, is it holiness in you to covet with greedy and tyrannical rapacity what nowise belongs to you? Ye hypocrites! If you dread lest the world be scandalized, why do you go about the world from house to house, distorting facts and exaggerating and calumniating, in order to spread into the souls of others some share of your own covetous vindictiveness."

This is parenthesis: and we return now to

the Faubourg St Martin, where Sir Edward Vavasour is spending the Christmas of 1846. He writes a pleasant description of the cell he occupies to his cherished daughter. He has in it a large statue standing on an elegant pedestal. This elegant pedestal is a stove, which helps to warm his aged body, as the statue warms his soul. "Thanks to the stove, I come warm out of bed at 4.30 in the morning. Pray tell your good Father Provincial Pagani that when I next visit Ratcliffe College I shall not put up with an ordinary cell after such luxuries as above." He proceeds to tell her something of his Christmas. "On the eve we went to bed at seven, to be roused at ten, and at half-past ten we were in the church to sing matins till twelve. Then we had three masses, communicating at the first. At two we retired to bed again till six. At half-past six in the church again till seven, when we had three other masses. At half-past eight breakfast, and at ten a grand high mass. Dinner at twelve. At two, vespers and compline sung, and at four *Salut* splendidly performed, with above three hundred lights, as the church is adorned with nine very handsome lustres, with twenty-four candles in each. There were ten incensers [thurifers], and with them above twenty other acolytes, all beautifully dressed, and all performing their parts with perfect regularity." All this ceremonial, he adds, gave him so much delight that he fears that perhaps his sanctity and merit might not be much advanced by it; especially, he says, "as the good Brothers watch and treat me very tenderly." "My stay here," he continues, "as to time is very uncertain; and I feel very well satisfied to leave well alone for the present." He was, no doubt, observing and

noting down what might be useful afterwards for the monastery in Yorkshire. "This conventual life," he goes on to say, "brings me nearer to you, my dear N——, though further removed in body. As Father Brownbill used to observe: 'Distant friends might be always closely united in God.' Let us be so now and for ever."

He remained in Paris till Lent; and it was during Lent that he wrote the letter, from which I have already quoted, announcing to his daughter that he had made over to her the money that was to come to her at his death.

Soon after writing this letter he must have left Paris to begin his journey to Rome. For he had resolved to go and throw himself at the feet of the Holy Father, to beg his blessing on the work for poor children to which he wished to devote the rest of his days. As his travelling companion he was to have a very old and valued friend, Dr Wilson, formerly of Nottingham, and afterwards Bishop of Hobart Town. Bishop Wilson had unexpectedly called on Sir Edward in Paris, and was received, says the writer from whom I copy, "with that burst of joy and excitement of spirits which were so much his own when in good form." He welcomed his old friend with the hearty greeting: "The very man in the world one would wish to see!" It was soon agreed that they were to make their pilgrimage to Rome together, as the Bishop was on his way thither. Sir Edward had just finished his retreat with the Jesuits, and Dr Wilson found him full of happy spiritual thoughts. It was agreed that the Bishop should start at once, as he had some business in Lyons. Sir Edward was to arrange some little matters in Paris and

follow in a day or two; and from Lyons they were to travel together.

On the day appointed Sir Edward started by diligence from Lyons, and arrived at Chanceau, in the Department of the Côte d'Or and not far from Lyons. There they came to the foot of a hill to be mounted, and the driver gave the order: "Descendez, messieurs." We know all French officials can, when it pleases them, assume a tone of majesty such as befits a representative of La France. None dare gainsay them. All the passengers, therefore, got down, and among the rest Sir Edward who, on account of his grey hairs and the intense agony which he had in past times suffered when climbing hills, well might have begged for exemption. But his ambition now was to be a humble religious Brother. His Divine Master was humble and obedient unto death; and therefore he asked for no privilege, but did his best to climb the hill with his fellow-travellers.

It was in vain he tried to keep pace with them. The terrible spasms round his heart came on with intense violence. It was as much as he could do to drag himself slowly along, till at last he reached the spot where the diligence was waiting. It was a spot where formerly an ancient cross had stood, but the men of the Revolution had in their frenzy pulled it down. Arrived there, Sir Edward at once, in words very faint, begged pardon humbly of the driver and his fellow-travellers for having kept them waiting. Alas! very soon all felt that the contrition and humble begging of forgiveness better befitted those who constrained him to climb the hill; for he never spoke again. He sank into the arms of the by-standers, and was dead.

Dead? Yes, and judged! "Good God!" men exclaim in such cases; "how sudden! how awful! how desolate! how unspeakably sad and miserable! Not one faithful servant with him; no medical man! One drop of cordial might have restored the action of his heart. On the roadside—not a bed, nor couch, nor chair to lay him down upon! And not one—absolutely not one—of his dear children, nor his brothers and nephews and nieces, that idolized him! Not one of his many genuine friends, not one to receive his parting word! Nay, worse than all this to the Catholic mind, no priest to say the words of salvation: 'I absolve thee!' No holy oil to soothe the soul before death! No minister of God to bring the Viaticum for his long journey! No consecrated voice to say: 'Go forth, Christian soul!' *Subvenite Sancti Dei!* 'Come to his assistance, all ye saints of God!' Alas! alas!"

And yet, I think—nay, I feel sure—that, if consulted beforehand, this true servant of the Lord would not have asked to have one detail changed in his death-scene. There is a little prayer, partly taken from St Augustine's works, which, I think, would faithfully express his mind:

> Not out of necessity, dear Lord Jesus,
> But because You willed it,
> And when You willed it,
> And where You willed it,
> And in all things as You willed it,
> You gave up Your Soul into the hands of Your Father.
> So be it with Your poor servant,
> When You will it, my Lord Jesus,
> And where You will it,
> And precisely in the manner that You will it;
> May I, dear Lord, breathe out my soul into Your hands.
> Amen.

This, I believe, would have been the deliberate answer of this good man, whose will was so conformed to the will of his Creator, if he had been questioned beforehand concerning the manner of his death-bed.

"Do you wish to die at the feet of the Holy Father, with his uplifted hand blessing you?"

"Do you wish to die in your cell in the monastery?"

"Do you wish to die with your dear children round you?"

"Do you wish to have your fellow-traveller, the venerated Bishop, with you in your last moments—to absolve you, to anoint you, to give you the Holy Viaticum?"

To each of these questions I think his deliberate answer would be: "Domine tu nosti."* "My good Lord, Thou knowest what Thy own will is. 'Ego servus tuus, Ego servus tuus.'† I am Thy servant, Thy poor unworthy servant; be it done to me according to Thy will and pleasure. Give me Thy love and Thy grace, and my heart is content."

To his family, who knew him well, his death did not seem either unprovided or desolate or miserable. From a letter written by one of his children, I see that among them the prevailing thought was the one contained in the words of the Holy Spirit: "In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, but they are in peace."‡ "He was not alone," his old friend, the Very Rev. Dr Tate, wrote; "our Blessed Lady, whom he served so well, and St Joseph were with him." His beloved daughter adds: "The feeling that he was in bliss was so strong and so singular at that time, and with it a strong sense of the

* Ezec. xxxvii. † Ps. cxv. ‡ Wisd. iii.

presence of Almighty God, that I always thought that poor papa, in his compassion for us—for he had the tenderest of hearts—obtained that our grief should be thus lightened."

The travellers by the diligence were well content to delay their journey for a little while till the good Curé of the adjacent church was found and brought to the spot; and with him came some of his parishioners attracted by the strange news, and with eager ears they listened to the story of the travellers. For each one had some edifying word to add about the holy English gentleman; how he read his *Imitation* and his Latin prayer-book, and how often he had his Rosary in his hand, and how absorbed in prayer he was, and how the tears came from his eyes; and with all that how kind and affable he was to every one, how pleasant a companion.

By some card or letter in his pocket or some other means they came to know that Bishop Wilson was waiting for him at Lyons; but some considerable time elapsed before, through Bishop Wilson, the tidings reached his family in England that Sir Edward was dead. On his brother, Mr Langdale, devolved the very painful office of going over to Chanceau to identify the body, in order that the English law courts might be assured of his death. This he was able to do with the aid of the good Curé, though three weeks had elapsed since death and decomposition had set in. When he went over, it was his intention to have Sir Edward's remains brought back to England to be interred at Hazlewood. But to his great surprise and consolation he found the good Curé and the people of the parish so persuaded, by what they had heard from his fellow-travellers and afterwards from Bishop Wilson, that they had

amongst them the body of a holy man, that they begged most earnestly not to be deprived of their treasure. Mr Langdale yielded to their pious wishes and contented himself with purchasing the ground where he was buried, and seeing that a fitting monumental stone was erected and the grave surrounded by iron railings. Here is an extract from a letter which Mr Langdale wrote at the time from Chanceau to their sister, Mrs Bland, in Yorkshire:

"The inhabitants of this remote parish and their truly respectable Curé were still full of the stranger whom Providence had sent to rest in their midst. Everything, both in his manner, conversation and prayers on the road had stamped the impression of the devoted Catholic and man of God on the companions of his journey from Paris by the diligence, whilst all his books and relics of piety, both on his person and in his travelling-case—['He always had a little old brown leather portmanteau,' writes his daughter] —showed that no ordinary soul had passed out of this world in the very midst of them. His memory will long be venerated, the good Bishop Wilson having corroborated the preconceived opinion of a saint being among them. The good Curé and the whole parish would have deeply deplored the removal of the precious remains of such a man, whose presence they confidently expected would draw down blessings upon them." Indeed, the good Curé told Mr Langdale that such already had been the case, and that several whom he had not expected to find at their Easter duties had been moved by this death and approached the sacraments.

Sir Edward was within six weeks of completing his sixty-first year when he was called

away. Mr Langdale brought back to England his prayer-books and relics and other articles of piety as souvenirs for his family; among the rest the discipline he used in the early morning in the spirit of penance and contrition. Bishop Wilson hastened on to Rome to console the Holy Father by telling him of the pilgrimage undertaken by a saintly Englishman to do honour to the Apostolic See.

Nothing of interest happened after this with regard to the death of Sir Edward till his son Philip, the late Canon Vavasour, went three years after his death to visit his father's grave. He had been always devotedly attached to his father, and was always a child of predilection. From his early boyhood it seemed to be assumed in his family that he was to be the future priest. When the Rosary was being said, he, though the youngest of all the children, was often called upon to lead off a decade; and when he and his next brother, older than himself, used to play, as they often did, at imitating some ecclesiastical ceremony, Philip always acted the part of the priest. He was now grown up and studying for Orders, and paid several visits to his father's grave. Of his first visit he tells his sister in a letter that when he arrived at the grave his grief and emotion found vent, to use his own phrase, "in a bellow."

Every time he went to Chanceau he distributed alms liberally among the poor of the place to obtain their prayers for his father's soul. In 1850, three years after his father's death, he paid his second visit, and remained there a week, and had many Masses offered up for the departed soul; and it had also occurred to his filial piety to make some reparation for the injurious excesses

of the Revolution by erecting a cross on the spot where his father fell, and where the old cross had been wantonly destroyed. The erection and blessing of this cross was attended by many clergy from the neighbouring parishes and a large body of the faithful; and one of the Lyons journals ends an edifying account of the ceremony with this tribute to Sir Edward: "Here indeed we have the ancient faith, the solid virtue of olden times, such as our forefathers practised, such as holy men practise in every country where the knowledge of Jesus Christ has penetrated; virtue such as the Catholics of England exhibit to the world; *a living faith* which sees God everywhere present, which inspires and rules not only all the actions of the day but every passing thought, *and a never failing charity* for the little ones and the poor of Jesus Christ. These are the two landmarks within which the just man ever spends his days, doing his work in peace and meekness, but with courage and energy, and above all with indomitable perseverance. Happy those countries, happy those families that feel the influence of these saving and fruitful principles. There, and there only, are all men truly brothers, enjoying freedom and equality, whatever may be their condition, their knowledge or their ignorance, their high or low estate in the passing world.

"France has prayed and still prays for England. Catholic England will in time intercede for France. The mortal remains of Edward Vavasour, which not by mere chance are interred amongst us, and which we look upon as a sacred treasure given to this neighbourhood, will be a guarantee of the mutual charity between the two countries."

It was found out afterwards that Sir Edward,

during life, had expressed a wish to be buried at Hazlewood if he should die there; but if he chanced to die at a distance, to be buried where he died. And thus his wishes, though at the time unknown, had been carried out. And so many years rolled by.

Twenty-nine years had now elapsed since his death. A new generation had grown up at Chanceau who had forgotten the scene on the road-side; but Sir Edward's devoted son, now Canon Vavasour, had not forgotten his father's grave, and was always yearning to have his remains buried in the old privileged cemetery at Hazlewood, where every Sunday Sir Edward used to be seen walking up and down saying from his "Libellus Precum"—the Sodalist's prayer-book which he had brought with him from his retreat at Stonyhurst and which was his inseparable companion—the Office of our Lady. Canon Philip consulted with the different members of his family, and as they were of opinion that the wishes of their father had now been sufficiently accomplished, he started for the last time for Chanceau, and—carrying out his plans very secretly in order not to awaken any opposition on the part of French officials—with the aid of the Curé he had the coffin of his father opened. Nothing now remained there but the skeleton, which at once collapsed, and one cover of a book that had been buried with him, probably his "Libellus" or the "Imitation of Christ." In order not to attract attention the bones were placed in an ordinary wooden box; a parting Requiem Mass was celebrated at Chanceau, and the dutiful son set out with his treasure for England. The passage from Dieppe to Newhaven was unusually stormy, and lasted twelve

anxious hours. How the box escaped the vigilant inquisitiveness of the Custom House officers we are not told, but after a very trying journey Canon Vavasour at last safely deposited his charge in the house of Mr Taylor, the Catholic undertaker of the West End of London, who is still well remembered by many. His veneration for Sir Edward Vavasour was unbounded, and it was for him a labour of love to rearrange the bones in their proper order in a suitable coffin. This coffin at length reached Hazlewood on the eve of the twenty-ninth anniversary of Sir Edward's death beside the diligence at Chanceau. The bishop of the diocese and a few priests of the neighbourhood and several members of the family had been invited to the private ceremony. The coffin, surrounded by lights, remained during the night in Hazlewood Church, and Marcia Lady Herries spent several hours praying beside the remains of her much loved father. Next morning, after the Requiem service, the coffin was laid in the family vault, which, through a special protection of Divine Providence, had never been desecrated in the evil days. R. I. P.

I have added this little memoir of Sir Edward Vavasour to the Funeral Discourse over the remains of Mr Langdale, because it seemed to me fitting that two brothers so kindred in their spirit of faith and so lovingly united together through life ought to be remembered together after death.

One incident happened in their early married days which, had they been brothers less true to each other and less bound together, might have produced an alienation or a coldness. By their

father's will the estates of Holme and Draycot, which formed a very considerable property, were left to his third son, Mr Langdale ; but there was appended to the will a clause which provided that in case the Hazlewood estates did not produce a certain specified income, sufficient to enable Sir Edward to maintain properly his position at Hazlewood, the Holme and Draycot estates were to go to him. Such a clause might easily have led to much unpleasantness. For a time Mr Langdale held the estates of Holme and Draycot, and from them derived at least one half of his income. Subsequently the question arose whether according to the terms of the will they ought not to be handed over to his elder brother, Sir Edward.

These two loving brothers, both full of the spirit of Christian faith and submission to God's will, did not rush into litigation, but left the question to be decided by their lawyers. When, after careful consideration, the lawyers decided that Mr Langdale must yield up possession to Sir Edward, not one word of complaint or murmur was heard. To his most intimate friend, William Constable Maxwell, afterwards Lord Herries, whom till death he cherished with a very special affection and veneration, Mr Langdale said as they were going out hunting together : "William, the lawyers say that I must give up Holme." This was all that was heard from him concerning the important decision which took from him half his property. There is peace on earth for men of good will, "a peace which this world cannot give" ; a peace "which passeth understanding."

During the administration of Lord Melbourne the Government offered to restore the old title of

Lord Langdale in favour of Sir Edward Vavasour. For reasons not known to us he declined the honour, and the title was afterwards, by another Government, given to a Protestant.

Bournemouth, October 9, 1889.

R. I. P.

Kind reader, pray for their souls and the souls of all the Faithful departed.

III--George W. Cuninghame

A Discourse delivered at his Funeral, in St Augustine's Church, Tunbridge Wells,* May 4, 1871

My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways My ways, saith the Lord.—ISAIAS lv, 8.

I HAVE come from a considerable distance, brethren, to have the privilege of taking some part in the funeral service of one whom I justly reverenced for the remarkable holiness of his life. As I had to instruct him and help him to prepare for his reception into the holy Catholic Church, and was subsequently very intimate with his spiritual life, I had ample opportunity of observing the exact fidelity with which he laboured to fulfil the duties of his position. And I can speak the more freely of his virtues as it has pleased the divine Providence that none of those whose fondness for him I might be tempted to flatter are able to be here to-day to listen to my words.

Well, brethren, in one short sentence from the Book of Ecclesiastes, "He that feareth God neglecteth nothing," † you have, I think, a picture of his life. A careful, painstaking industry in bringing to its completion any work which he considered to be his duty, was the most marked feature in his character. Before setting his hand

* He had been staying at Tunbridge Wells—away from his family—for health's sake; and then died very suddenly.

† Eccles vii, 19.

to any business he was thoughtful and cautious to a degree quite marvellous at his age. He considered most carefully whether the project were for God's glory, whether he had strength for the task, whether any one, either of his equals or his servants, might find cause of complaint in his action. To his own consideration on these points he added the counsels of his family, and especially of his mother, to whom he listened with admirable docility. Such a habit of patient forethought, if it were more common, would, we may infer from Holy Writ, be sufficient to alter the sad condition of the world; for, according to Jeremias the prophet,* it is because "no one thinketh in his heart, that the whole earth is with desolation made desolate."

This careful consideration before action was followed by a most scrupulous attention to detail, and a watchful and persevering supervision till he could say, with our divine Master, *Consummatum est*—"My task is completed." I have known him to travel from the south of England to Scotland, and repeat the journey several times, to ensure the success of a pious work which he had in hand. And this holy industry was not merely fitful or periodical. His years were very full; his working days were many, his holidays few indeed. And there were three circumstances which rendered his life of labour both more surprising and more edifying. The first was, that he was in a position which, according to the ordinary views of men, fairly exempted him from drudgery. He was, in the first place, an invalid with enough strength left to travel about and enjoy the varieties of different countries, had he been inclined to allow himself indulgence.

* Jerem. xii, 11.

Secondly, he had quite sufficient of the substance of this world to enable him to lead an easy and a pleasant life, had he chosen to give himself rest and pleasure. Thirdly, he was singularly free from cares or engrossing occupations of his own; for the laborious life he led was altogether devoted to watching over the interests of one or other of the members of his family, to serve whom most devotedly he seemed to look upon as the mission given to him; and if their business did not fully occupy his time and his energy, he was most ready to devote all that remained to some shape of labour in the cause of the poor.

Watching his unselfish career, his thoughtfulness, his fidelity in prayer, his fondness for reading good books, his disrelish of all the ordinary attractions of this world, I have often been surprised, as he was himself, that he felt no call to the priesthood. We now know how slender his thread of life was, and that, possibly, he might not have been able to endure the course of study necessary as a preparation for the sacred ministry; and we do not wonder that he rested quite contented in the thought that he could sanctify himself and do the will of his Father in heaven by devoting himself assiduously to the duties which his untiring charity found in his home life.

Next to his filial piety and his devotedness to his family, I would mention his solicitude for the poor. I say solicitude, because his was not ordinary almsgiving. Nay, it was even something more generous than almsgiving; for there was in his charity towards the poor the same careful forethought, the same painstaking industry that distinguished his other good works; and the care he took to ascertain where real want was pinch-

ing, and to find out the best means for giving relief, much enhanced the value of all he gave. Another feature of his charity to the poor which often impressed me was its steady uniformity. He was not kind to them by impulse, but seemed deeply impressed by the conviction that he was but their steward, and was bound to share largely with them all the days of his life. And it was not merely out of his superabundance that he fed and clothed them, but with a very severe rigour he cut down his own expenditure, in order that he might satisfy his tenderness of conscience on behalf of Christ's poor.

To this rapid sketch of his life of devotedness and charity I will but add one more detail. St James had good reason to remind us that he who offends not with his tongue is a perfect man;* for do we not all know that it is easy to do many good works, and to say many prayers, and yet prove by the uncontrollable recklessness of our tongue how far we are from true holiness? Now I think that those who lived in the closest intimacy with him around whose coffin we are gathered will agree with me in witnessing that his tongue was well-nigh as offensive during his lifetime as it is now in death. His Creator had given to him in his young days that grace which we pray for with the psalmist, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and a door round about my lips."† Whether the conversation turned on religious topics, or on the character and doings of his neighbour, or on the vices of the world, one might still say of him the words recorded of holy Job, "In all these things he sinned not by his lips, nor spake he any foolish thing against God."‡

* James iv. † Ps. cxl, 3. ‡ Job i.

And now, my brethren, I must briefly suggest a solution to several questions which would assuredly rise up in the minds of those who loved him, were they present to hear what I have been saying. If all this be so, they might ask, how do you account for what has happened? If he was a pattern of dutiful attachment to his parents and the staff of their declining years, why was he hurried out of life? Why was he not blessed with length of days? Again, if he was useful to his family, and was sanctifying himself by serving them, why was he not spared to them? Or, if he was constant in alms-giving, how comes it that his almsgiving did not protect him from a sudden death? For surely it is written, "Lay up alms in the heart of the poor, and it shall obtain help for thee against all evil."* Lastly, if a blameless tongue attested the genuineness of his holiness, how comes it that the angels of God did not watch over him to shelter his delicate frame, at least until his family had gathered around his death-bed to say their parting word of blessing?

My brethren, to all these questions our Lord Himself makes a meek answer in the words of my text: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways My ways." Not that He yields to any one on earth in true affection and a most tender love for His faithful servants, for is not that word His: "Can a woman forget her infant? and if she should forget, yet will I not forget thee."† No; all the strong and touching affection which we meet with in family life is, after all, like the flowers of the earth and the stars in the firmament, only a created and very faint image of that unmeasured and inconceivable

* Ecclus xxix. † Is. xlix.

love with which God our Creator and our Father in heaven loves the child whom He has created, redeemed and sanctified, for companionship with Himself. But His ways of showing His love must necessarily differ widely from ours. And hence we are greatly mistaken if, when we hear of a death like this one, which hurries out of the world in the flower of his youth one whom we would wish to grow old with us here, we think that the blow which God has struck is necessarily a chastisement or an act of severity. Were we to say to our blessed Saviour, "Who sinned, this man or his parents?" His answer might be, as of old: "Neither this man nor his parents, but that the works of God be made manifest in him."* Let us try, brethren, reverently to enter into the thoughts of God, and understand in some degree why He sometimes may not give a long life here to the good and dutiful son. I will not attempt an adequate study of the ways of divine Providence, but merely suggest a few thoughts that may help reflection.

In the first place, then, let us remember that what we call life here on earth must be, in the eyes of those who have reached their home in heaven, a banishment so dreary that nothing but the memory of our Saviour's life and death on this earth could make it tolerable. The days passed in this valley of tears, described by holy Job as full of sorrow and misery, are no more the true life for which man was created than the nine months before his birth were. True life begins when man, the child and image of his Creator, is admitted at last into the home in heaven prepared for him by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. There only he finds life and

* John ix.

peace and joy, in the knowledge and love of his ever-blessed Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Alas! which of us can at all conceive how thoroughly broken-hearted and desolate a man would be who, after having died happily, and seen even one glimpse of true life in heaven, was compelled to return to the poor pleasures, the trifling business, the loathsome sins and fearful risks of this earth? If the tears and sighs of his relations could prevail to change his destiny and bring him back to this world, with what a flood of grief, with what tender expostulations would he beg of their compassion not to inflict so cruel a misery? Not only then is there no proof of God's displeasure in an early death, if the soul be prepared for it; but, on the contrary, such a death is oftentimes one of the most merciful and loving rewards which our Father in heaven feels bound to give to one who has borne his yoke from childhood, and by holy industry has lived full days, and by reaching to sanctity in a short time has done the work of many years. As soon as our Blessed Saviour was able to say: "Consummatum est—My work is done," there was no further delay—He bowed His head, and said: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit." And if a young man has, by fidelity and watchfulness and a persevering spiritual industry, reached in the flower of his youth the ripeness of a good old age, why should his banishment be prolonged? His guardian angel, his patrons, his future companions in glory point to his empty throne and say to our Lord: "Thou shalt arise and have mercy on Sion, for it is time to have mercy on it, for the time is come, for the

stones thereof have pleased Thy servants."* If we once believe as we ought that heaven is the Christian's true home, and that existence here is only banishment and imprisonment and wretched slavery, then shall we also believe that a holy death is all the more precious because it comes soon; and that the saints of heaven, who have tasted the bitterness of this world and experienced its risks, are pleading "with groanings unspeakable" on behalf of those who have fought a good fight and completed their race, that their banishment may not be prolonged.

And now, brethren, a short word upon another question. Even supposing that a young man is ready for death, yet, when his devotedness, his prudence, and the holy example of his life are rendering priceless service to his family and his friends, for their sakes at least might he not have been suffered to remain a longer time on earth? This is a reasonable wish, brethren. For St Paul tells us that on this very account he was straitened between two minds. On the one side he writes: "To me to live is Christ, to die is gain." Therefore he has "a desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ, a thing by far the better"; but, on the other hand, "to abide still in the flesh is needful for you."† Thus also it was that other saints, full of the charity of Christ Jesus, have on their death-beds offered themselves to further toil and a prolonged exile here on earth, if their Creator saw that they could still be useful to the flock of Christ. This being the case, we, knowing the careful compassion with which our Father in heaven watches over His family here, may trust that when he calls away a

* Ps. ci. † Phil. i.

faithful servant He is thinking of the interests of those who remain behind here as well as of those who go. As long as one is really wanted here below he will be left here, as our Lord was left though heaven was yearning for Him. St Paul knew this; and consequently, after expressing his longing for death, he adds these words: "Having this confidence [that I am needful for you], I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith."* So long, then, as the faithful servant has good work to do, so long will he be suffered to remain here and do it. But, once more, our Lord says most condescendingly to us: "Remember that 'My thoughts are not your thoughts.' When you who live in the very dim twilight imagine that you see a necessity for the banishment on earth to be prolonged, I, who live in the light, and know better than all others the secrets of the souls which I Myself created, see very clearly that the moment is come to send My angel and say to My faithful servant: You went forth from God; you must come home to your God. Even for the mourners who weep over your grave your death will be a gain." For it is quite certain, brethren, if we look at things with the eye of faith, that a dutiful son and a faithful and affectionate and edifying brother, if he can be of service to his family by living, can often help them more by dying. For no master, no apostle, can bring home to the hearts of a family the truth that we have not here an enduring city so forcibly as does the vacant place by the fireside or at the family table, when one much valued and beloved has been called away in the midst of his days. The closed lips and

* Phil. i.

silent tongue speak, in a language that no one else can speak, the words: "Watch and pray" and be prepared; "yesterday for me, to-day for you."*

A second way in which a holy death benefits those that survive is this: ever since the death of Christ on Mount Calvary, the moment of death seems to have a mysterious power for good; a virtue seems to go forth from the last agony and the stillness of the coffin. And he who quits this world for a better one oftentimes as he mounts to heaven drops his mantle and his spirit of holiness on some one of those familiar with him.

And now, in the same brief way, let us glance hurriedly at the third question before us. It is this: If a man's hour is come and he must die, still, if in life he has been a good faithful servant, why, at least, is not his death-bed consoled by all the blessed rites of holy Church? Why has not his soul a friendly warning to prepare for the long journey? To this question, without presuming to fathom too curiously the mysteries of the kingdom of God, I may make answer that there is in reality only one good preparation for death, and that is a holy life. What thought is there of the many suggested to us by death more useful and more true than this one, that we shall die as we live? Death must resemble life. "Doth a fountain," argues St James, "send forth out of the same hole sweet and bitter water? Can the fig-tree, my brethren, bear grapes, or the vine figs? So neither can the salt water yield sweet."† Death and life are only portions of the same stream, issuing from the same fountain. Unless a miracle be worked, one cannot be bitter, the other sweet. Death, again, is the fruit of life.

* Ecclus xxxviii, 23. † Jas iii, 11, 12.

If the vine, according to the due courses of nature, produces the grape, sanctity of life will, as a rule, produce holiness in death. Our Blessed Saviour was inculcating this truth when He so often warned us that He would come like a thief, at midnight, and that we must not reckon on a special preparation which shall suddenly change the fountain of bitter water into a sweet stream, or the useless and poisonous weed into a fruitful vine. This being so, if a young man is by the holiness of his life ready whenever the Bridegroom cometh, then for him to be called away without a long time for preparation, or without such helps as the minister of God can bring, is no calamity. Else the great St Francis Xavier, dying at the close of his devoted life unblessed by man, without the consolation of any holy Sacrament, lonely on a desert shore, would have had reason to complain, and his death would perhaps be a stumbling-block to us. An unprovided death is indeed misery unspeakable; but holy men, who have dreaded the frailty of long hours of sickness, have been known to pray that their death might be sudden but well prepared. And let us not forget that besides his priests and our friends on earth, God has always His angels to visit and watch over the death-bed of His faithful servants. To the just man then, snatched away suddenly, no harm is done, and meanwhile it is a signal grace and blessing for surviving friends that the truth is forced upon them that they must live every day like men who at any hour may be summoned away; faithful servants, girt up and with lamps in their hands, expecting their Master's coming. For, as I have already said, nothing convinces us so thoroughly of the uncertainty of life as that sudden, unexpected,

bewildering word, "He is dead," when it breaks in abruptly on the plans and hopes of a happy family life. If this be true, brethren, imagine, if you can, with what humble gratitude we shall adore the thoughts and ways of our most merciful Creator when the whole truth is at last revealed to us, and we discover that He has often snatched hurriedly out of life those who are well prepared for death, in order to compel survivors to see that it was time to make themselves ready. A sudden death then, I say, if not unprovided, is no curse either to the departed one or to his mourning friends, but may be a blessing to both. It is not many years since by a terrible accident, most sudden and most appalling, a large number of persons, chiefly of humble condition, were burned to death in the church where they were offering their worship. From all we have been able to learn, they were of all the inhabitants those most fit to appear at the judgement-seat. And this blow which the angel of God so unexpectedly levelled against them was, I have heard, the salvation of many who were spared; for the face of a wicked town was changed by this calamity.

And now, brethren, there only remains one other difficulty on which I may offer a suggestion; and it is this. Even if it be expedient that death should do its work abruptly, so as to leave a salutary impression on many minds, might we not at least hope that one who had been docile to grace and a true follower of his divine Master would have been allowed the privilege of having with him at his death, as our Blessed Lord had, his mother and one or two of those most loved? It will be to some extent an answer to this very natural and plausible regret if I ask this ques-

tion: Was it as a gratification to Himself or to her that our dying Redeemer decreed His holy Mother's presence at the Cross? Was not every pain inflicted on Him made doubly agonizing by the consciousness that she was looking on with a bleeding heart? Was it not precisely because He wished that no shape or form of sorrow be wanting to His bitter chalice that He chose to have her by Him? I do not think that His design was to secure present gratification, either to His own divine heart or to hers. I think He was looking beyond present time into the long eternity during which her consolations were to abound according to the measure of her suffering here; and, in order to multiply beyond conception the jewels in her diadem, permitted her to become the queen of martyrs and mother of sorrows on Mount Calvary. It is not for the short hour that is now passing swiftly by that our Lord is planning; it is for the glorious moment that is coming, when He shall at last be able to relieve His divine Heart by saying, "Come, you blessed of my Father"; and that joyful task shall begin, which is never to come to an end, of recompensing with a weight of glory, eternal and immeasurable, the trifling disappointments and pains of this time of trial. Sometimes, therefore, in order that treasure may be laid up for heaven, our Saviour gathers the family round the death-bed, and makes it their duty to nurse the dying man as they would nurse and cherish Himself. At others, following the dictates of His own divine wisdom and charity, whose thoughts are different from our thoughts, He exercises a Creator's rights in another way, and without any warning converts a happy home into a house of mourning and

agony of heart, in order that those whom He thus proves in the fire of tribulation may win their eternal recompense, not by charity to the sick, but by a loyal reverence to their good God in the bitter hour of bereavement. For if a Christian family can look on the coffin of him who sleeps there, not with the despair of the old Pagan world, but with Christian faith and Christian hope, which sees that it is the merciful hand of our heavenly Father that snaps asunder the silver cord of life;* if, while their tears flow in spite of them, they can reverently say with holy Job, "God gave [him,] God hath taken [him] away; as it hath pleased the Lord, so is it done; blessed be the name of the Lord," † such resignation, such trust, will never be forgotten throughout eternity. Our Lord will be moved by it as He was by Magdalen's affection; He will take delight in it as He took delight when, with the heart of a true Father, He singled out the fidelity of His faithful servant Job and said, "Hast thou considered my servant Job?" ‡

We will not then, my brethren, I say to you with St Paul, "have you ignorant concerning them that sleep, even as they are who have no hope"; but wheresoever, whensoever, and howsoever God calls His faithful servant out of this life, still think rightly concerning death, and say still—"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord: for their works shall follow them." § And be quite sure that when at length our God, who created us in love, explains to us His thoughts and His ways, we shall all confess with humble and most grateful hearts that He is justified in all His ways, in all His words, and that when judged He has come out victorious. With such

* Eccles. xii. † Job i. ‡ Job i. § Apoc. xiv.

faith and hope to soothe in some degree the great sorrow of their souls, Christian mourners may succeed in forgetting their own bereavement, and occupy their thoughts with a charitable concern for the one who is taken away, following him in spirit, and pouring out upon him now that charity which there was no opportunity of exercising beside his death-bed. They will say with feeling, with fervour, and with holy importunity, "Remember not, O Lord, his offences, nor his ignorances, nor the sins of his childhood; but grant him eternal rest, and let perpetual light shine upon him. Amen."

R. I. P.

Kind reader, pray for his soul and the souls of all the Faithful departed.

APPENDIX II.—Margaret Mary Cuninghame

The following memoir of Mary Cuninghame, sister of G. W. Cuninghame, was written at my request by Blanche, Lady Fitzgerald. It consists chiefly of a diary which she kept during the last illness of Miss Cuninghame : and represents very faithfully her character and her sanctity. Lady Fitzgerald watched her with all the interest of an intimate friend, and with a very correct judgement appreciated her virtues.

It was on February 9, 1867, that I saw Mary Cuninghame again after an interval of some months. The disease had gained ground so rapidly that I should hardly have recognized her. The extreme peace and happiness of her countenance, however, prevented the impression from being painful. I asked her if she were longing to see God. She said, "Oh no; that *craving* that I used to have is gone off; it is enough that I am with Him, *quite* close to Him."

The nun who is nursing her told me that her patience never varied. *Nous faisons avec elle tout ce que nous voulons.*

February 10th.—"I am often surprised," she said to me, "why I get all these graces in the shape of *more patience, more resignation.* I only lie here all day, and our Lord gives them to me." Speaking of occasional great sacrifices for God : "Yes, no doubt they ought to be made," she said, "but I have a greater devotion to doing the everyday mortifications and little sacrifices." She takes all the remedies prescribed quite

simply, but without troubling herself whether or not they are successful. Her joy, as she says, is not "in life or in death, but in *present* union with God. I think happiness will prolong my life," she remarked one day.

For some days the following week she was particularly suffering, and the doctors gave her sleeping draughts which plunged her into a sort of stupor. "There is to be no grumbling," she said to me one day, "but I would rather be awake and pray. I can only dream just now, and that *steals* the time."

February 21st.—For the first time I saw signs of depression. "My strength is going," she said directly, "and my courage with it. I am so weak that I am beginning to be afraid—fancy being afraid of death!" I told her of my husband's look of peace at the moment when God called him; and of Miss Mason's happiness when they placed her to die facing the Blessed Sacrament. In a moment her interest in others is aroused, and she does not give herself another thought.

"When I am *very* weak and stupid," she says to me, "I think I am going a *little* way from our blessed Lord, and then I brighten up and come back close to Him."

February 22nd.—The day that she was anointed. Some hours after she said to me: "Oh, I cannot at all describe my intense happiness; it had nothing to do either with living or dying. It was quite enough to be *close* to our Lord, and to tell Him over and over again that I *do* love Him so." To describe the expression of intense love that lit up her countenance is impossible. She spoke with an animation and a decision which is quite foreign to her timid

nature;* but that I have observed before. I think our Lord allows her to be able to speak so freely of her love for Him that she may inspire others with the same. Her answers to the different articles of faith read to her before Extreme Unction were remarkably loud and distinct considering her weak state. Afterwards she said to me, "My faith felt so firm I should have liked to have shouted"; and speaking of the immense consolation she had found in the Church, she added: "When first I heard the Hail Mary I felt just as if I had found a second mother; and as for the *Salve Regina*, it was like some exquisite dream from paradise."

February 23rd.—Looking at a little picture of Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque, which represents the saint kneeling with outstretched arms before a statue of the Sacred Heart, "I feel exactly like that after Holy Communion," she said, "as if my soul were quite drawn up and my body *longed* to follow it."

February 24th.—Speaking of the Epistle of the day: "Oh, how often I have thought of those words of St Paul, 'Power is made perfect in infirmity!'† I am so made up of infirmities that I tell our Blessed Lord that that is the best reason why He should make some use of me. You see my body is *all* weakness, so I ought to be of *great* use." This struck me intensely; it was really glorying in infirmity.

February 27th.—*Apropos* of what advances us in spiritual life: "I have such an opinion of a real good confession. I always used to note

* Lady Fitzgerald says truly that Miss Cuninghame was naturally very shy and reticent, and when she spoke out firmly and with simplicity it was always for our Lord's sake or to help some soul.

† 2 Cor. xii.

down at night all my sins, and then I could be really exact at confession."

Evidently she had studied every step in interior life, and then applied herself to perfecting it.

Speaking of the Presence of God: "I feel so *joyous* to be near Him." She always animates me to generosity. She does not understand unwilling sacrifices; and when I speak grudgingly, she remarks simply, "How curious; I do not feel that at all." Another day when I retract, her eyes brighten and she says: "Now, that's right. I like that much better." Her love of our Lord is so great that she feels pained at the slightest unkindness of others towards Him.

February 28th.—She spoke of her Communion the next day as Viaticum with intense delight. "The quiet time afterwards is such happiness; before there was always a wish for food which disturbed me. I am afraid I was unresigned to that. It is almost a pity the same cannot happen again, that I might behave better." Her recognition of the slightest imperfection is very striking.

Referring to her favourite theme, love of souls: "All my bright moments I give to souls. I like to be busy among them. The rest of the time I am satisfied with keeping close to God."

March 2nd.—She spoke to me of her lifelong wish to consecrate herself to God, and the craving to get great union with Him.* "I knew nothing of contemplation in my protestant days, but when I saw great happiness, among married people for instance, or found great pleasure in

* She had fully made up her mind to become a nun as soon as her health allowed her, and had already made a vow of chastity.

books or drawings or scenery, I *felt* in my heart that there was something far beyond all this if I could only find it. Then I decided that to live for the poor was the thing to do; but now all my attraction is towards the Blessed Sacrament." Speaking of the difficulty of overcoming vanity: "Yes," she said, "it cost me a good deal to get rid of my liking to have everything *in the best taste;* but this idea that was given to me helped me over it most: not to think when I made my sacrifice that I was victimizing myself, but that I was making some little present to our Lord."

I constantly used to tell her of cases of distress, and ask her to offer up her sufferings for them, which she always promised to do with the utmost cheerfulness. "Here I am quite ready to be of a little use if I am wanted," she said one day when more than usually ill and feeble. About this time she became much worse. Constant fainting fits, exhaustion, difficulty in breathing and violent interior pain in turn attacked her, and her strength daily diminished. She became very nervous at the approach of death, and dreaded the suffering to which she had been in the habit of offering herself.

This was a great source of humiliation to her. "Oh," she said, "you see what a coward I am to shrink from a little pain!" She blamed herself for impatience, though none of those who saw her could help admiring the extraordinary spirit of meekness, cheerfulness and consideration for those around her that she preserved so courageously to the end. She had an intense devotion to St Joseph, and used to appeal to him in her nervous moments with great confidence. But the chief thing, she told me, that gave her

courage and peace at this time was humbling manifestations of conscience.

"*Don't* conceal meannesses," she used to say to me. She was very energetic on that subject. "I could preach such a sermon on it," she said. She spoke often latterly of the great happiness of purity of soul only to be obtained by a generous and unsparing avowal of faults and weaknesses. "Draw the picture of your soul *as it is*," she said in one of our last conversations. "Don't leave any dark places; root out *everything*." She spoke of the clear perception of her faults and the power she had had of acknowledging them as one of the greatest graces that had ever come to her. "I am so happy," she said a few days before her death; "such peace and joy. I have cleared out my soul, and it is so clean and white now." Again she spoke of the necessity of facing faults, and of how much the humiliation of owning them is worth. The interior peace and joy that seemed to possess her whole soul struck me as something very remarkable. It was such a contrast to her bodily state, which was one of great suffering and depression. She was panting for breath and could scarcely articulate, but the earnestness of her expression supplied for what she left unsaid.

On March 27 I was obliged to leave home for some days, and saw her but for a few minutes before my departure. She was very weak and could speak but little, but her peace of soul was evident: her mind clear and practical as ever, and her heart overflowing with zeal and charity for others. Some time previously, speaking of an event in which we were both interested, she said dolefully, "I think I hardly *could* wait so

long—six months." We scarcely guessed then that the end was so near.

On my return the following Tuesday I found her, alas! only just alive. She had broken a blood-vessel the previous day, and from that moment had stood on the threshold of eternity. Her features were sharpened by suffering and her wasting away, and her countenance showed the approach of death. She could not speak, but there was the peculiarly bright earnest expression that told plainer than words of the heroic courage of her soul. She was *perfectly* conscious, and her last warm embrace seemed to contain *everything* she would have said; and intensely as I had wished to be with her at the bright end, it was not to be so. On reaching the house the following afternoon I found that God had already taken her to Himself. It would be impossible to forget the expression of that countenance in death. Mingled with its extreme sweetness there was a look of dignity and triumph, as if her ear had caught the welcome sounds of victory and as if the bright crown were already hers. The sight too of those beloved remains brought home the remembrance of her absolute and unreserved consecration to God. She had yearned to be His spouse with an ardour only equalled by the desire to gaze upon His Face, and yet these feelings were controlled and taught to yield to such complete submission to the will of God that her happiness was to have *no* will but His. She often used to say it was so strange she could not fix upon an Order. Suffering was to be her novitiate, the sick room her cloister, and she was content that it should be so, for it was the lot chosen for her by Him to whom she

had given herself with all the strength of her will and the warmth of a true and most passionate heart.

To the few details of this touching and edifying illness I add a slight sketch of her previous life gathered principally from conversations with her mother and brothers.

Mary was always the joy of their home life. She was talented, bright and *specially* unselfish. One of her brothers told me that during his illness she was always ready at any moment to lay aside her harp or her drawing and devote herself to nursing and amusing him.

She was extremely industrious, and this habit clung to her long after her health failed and exertion became very painful. About six months before her death she executed an elaborate copy of St Francis Xavier from an old picture, which, considering her suffering state, is an extraordinary specimen of patient and laborious industry. The accuracy and delicate finish illustrate so well the care that everything done for God received at her hands; for after her conversion she sought Him as assiduously in her occupations as in her prayers. An antependium for an altar of our Blessed Lady, and a child's frock begun remain unfinished, touching relics of the energy and charity that conquered pain and languor and resisted idleness to the last. She used to sit up and work, then lie down exhausted, to begin again at the first moment of comparative strength." *

To return to the days before her conver-

* It was also during her last illness that she translated the little work, "An Hour before the Blessed Sacrament."—EDITOR.

sion. She was intensely fond of her quiet home life, and loved her country pursuits dearly. For some years her father was a great invalid, and Mary became his constant companion and nurse. She had such an excellent head that she was able to write his letters, transact his business, and take the place, in fact, of a secretary. Her affection for him knew no limit, and her whole existence appeared to become bound up in him. Towards the end she devoted herself still more and more assiduously; and when the blow at last fell, it nearly cost her her life. Strength and nerves completely gave way, and she drooped, never again *really* to rally. But with the cross that crushed that young life came that priceless gift, the light of faith. She had seen her father's reception into the Church; the consolations that Catholicity had brought to that death-bed; the power of the faith to sustain during the last dreaded conflict, and her deep, earnest mind drank in the truth. Once convinced, the faith and love that took possession of her soul were unbounded. She used to describe the increased knowledge of God that dawned upon her at her conversion as inexpressible happiness.

I do not remember her exact words, but something suggested to her about the infinite beauty of God made such an impression on her that it was after that easy for her to give Him the first place in her heart; not but that she had difficulties in her start in spiritual life, for her ardour was greater than her strength, but with Mary difficulties were never allowed to be impossibilities, and she only set herself all the more intently to carry out her aim. She had a peculiar way of encouraging others to push on to

God, cost what it would. She could not bear to see aspirations lowered.

For many, many months she suffered intensely in many ways. Her appetite completely failed, and, as she used to say of herself, she had "forgotten how to sleep." Her nerves were so completely unhinged that the least noise was torture to her. With all her fervour and attraction to the services of the Church, she was never once able to go to High Mass or hear a sermon. On one single occasion during the three years she was a Catholic she was permitted to assist at Benediction, and that in the sacristy at Tunbridge Wells, to her intense delight. At one time when comparatively stronger she was able to go to the ten o'clock Mass at Farm Street, and I can see her now kneeling absorbed as if she had found her paradise.* Later, when again too ill to leave the house in the morning, she said to me, with a shade on her countenance, "The doctor has cut off my Mass." This was the *extent* of her grumbling. Her acquired spirit of meekness was something extraordinary, and when one reflects that it was sustained through three years of sickness and prostration, and increased instead of diminishing with her infirmities, it becomes striking indeed. God rewarded her fortitude by a great gift of prayer; and the sleepless nights were no longer a source of anguish, for her soul was incessantly united to Him, and the long hours passed in pleading for the spiritual necessities of others. She had a special devotion to helping souls to perfection, and this she knew well was to be done by suffering for them. Her

* Miss Cuninghame always observed strict custody of eyes in church as faithfully as any novice could. It often occurred to me what worlds of distraction would be avoided if all devout persons imitated her in this practice.—EDITOR.

natural fastidiousness and love of refinement she mortified assiduously. She formerly liked to have every article of dress to match in tint. This was soon "broken down," to use her own expression. She got to love to wear old and shabby things; but to please her mother and brothers she would give up her own way on this point. She took no credit to herself for these mortifications: "Illness has done everything for me," she used to say humbly. Her attraction to poverty was very great. One day her conversation turned upon the remarks of St John of the Cross upon *luxury* in interior objects of devotion. She glanced at her own little altar exclaiming, "Ah, perhaps my things are too fine." It was easy to reassure her, for nothing could exceed their simplicity. One of her brothers told me that shortly before her death she had wished for a statuette of the Assumption (I think), but on hearing the price, three shillings, she said: "Oh, that is really too much to give for a thing for oneself."

Around her bed, to which she was confined during her last two months on earth, were placed various images and pictures, all of the humblest description;* in fact they were distributed all over the room, so that every glance might be directed to some object that spoke to her of God or His saints. Her best earthly treasure was a little picture of our Blessed Lord, a prisoner in the blessed Sacrament, which day and night her eye used to rest upon with intense delight.

During the winter and spring months of 1866 I often saw Mary; but her extreme shyness and nervousness seemed constantly to prevent our

* Except a handsome crucifix to which I have alluded in the Introduction.—EDITOR.

becoming intimate. She *felt* so strongly on all spiritual subjects that words appeared to fail her; and I dreaded pressing her to speak her thoughts for fear of overfatiguing her and perhaps costing her additional headaches. Gradually, however, the nervous timidity subsided and she was able to speak of what filled her heart to overflowing. I can never forget her look and tone when speaking of the *motive* of work. She exclaimed: "Oh, it must be all for love: love is everything." It used to puzzle me at that time, when I knew comparatively nothing of her intense union with God, how she came by such clear lights and ideas.* Her information too was so accurate about the feasts and observances of the Church, about religious life, its spirit and meaning, down to the minutest details of the different Orders. She was allowed to read very little, but the religious books that fell into her hands were made the *very* most of. Her favourite book, and the one that made the most vivid impresston on her mind, was the "Life of Blessed John Berchmans." "Oh, how I have studied that book and picked it to pieces!" she said to me one day. She selected that saint for her special model, and the admirable consistency of her life was, I think, very much the result of her careful imitation of him.

Later there was a novena made for her, not with the direct object of obtaining her cure—*that* she decidedly objected to—but with this intention, that if it so pleased almighty God to restore her to health, honour might accrue to Blessed John Berchmans, and devotion to him

* I was also much surprised at the extent of Miss Cuninghame's knowledge on spiritual subjects: all gained in her sick-room during her three years of Catholic life.—EDITOR.

be materially increased. But God's ways are not *our* ways. The consecration so generous, so unreserved on earth was soon to be consummated in heaven, and the longing ardour of that fervent soul for complete union with her celestial Spouse was to be abundantly satisfied without delay.

Loved and cherished as she was by all who knew her, admirable as was her example, precious her patient suffering in the sight of God and His angels, no one dares repine at such a death; a *fiat* rises from the heart to the lips, when in spirit those who watched by her sick-bed follow Miss Cuninghame to her bright home beyond the grave.

Note.—Blanche Lady Fitzgerald had been left a widow while yet very young, and being of a singularly attractive character, had many devoted friends besides Miss Cuninghame. She had sufficient income to enable her to enjoy life had she been so minded, but very soon after the death of the beloved friend whose last days she has chronicled, she devoted herself to the services of our Lord among the Irish Sisters of Charity, and very soon ended her career on earth. Her death followed her profession very closely.

R. I. P.

Kind reader, pray for their souls and the souls of all the Faithful departed.

IV--Cecil, Marchioness of Lothian

A Discourse preached at the Solemn Dirge in her Memory in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Farm Street, London, May 29, 1877 *

Be ye then also ready, for at what hour you think not the Son of Man will come.—ST LUKE xii, 40.

BEFORE coming into your presence, dear brethren, I have tried, if I may so speak, to take counsel of the dead. I have studied with diligence to find out the word which your cherished friend who has been called away would wish to be addressed to you. For we may surely assume that she still has a zeal for those she has left behind. Even the selfish rich man, whose heart had been hardened by indulgence and luxury, when he came among the realities of the next world, wished to send a warning word to his father's home.† How much stronger then, how immeasurably more intense, will be the yearnings of those who die in the charity of Christ for the friends whom they have left in the uncertainties of this terrible battlefield!

Now that life, as we call it, is over, or, as the holy Scripture expresses it, now that the dream of this earth is ended, and her soul awakened to the difference between moments here and the eternity to come; now that she has stood at the judgement-seat, and seen the searching eye of our Blessed Lord, and understood how thoroughly

* As Lady Lothian died in Rome, some time had elapsed after her death when the discourse was delivered.

† Luke xiv.

that word of His comes true, "One thing is necessary"; now that what we deem the business, and important politics, and the exciting news of this world prove to be after all only the folly and trifling of unfortunate dupes—since man must so soon go "into the house of his eternity" *—now at length she realizes what the moment of death is, how decisive, how final, how eternal in its doom, since as the tree falls so must it lie.† And therefore do I think that if she might come back hither to say one word to you now, my brethren, that word would be the one which our Blessed Saviour so earnestly and in so many different forms urged upon us: "Be ye also ready, for in the hour you think not the Son of Man shall come." Nay, were we even permitted the comfort of having her mortal remains here in the midst of us, and contemplating the work that death has done, *most emphatically*, and, at the same time, *most persuasively*, would her cold, silent lips speak this word to us: "Be ye also ready."

May the blessed Mother of God, who helped her in life and in death, and whom we so often ask to help us "now and at the hour of our death," obtain for us a great grace to profit by the counsel which her passage out of this world gives to us!

I have said, then, dear brethren, in the first place, that this death, which has taken so much possession of our thoughts, speaks to us *emphatically* the word: "Be ye also ready." For, among its many circumstances and details, which have been carefully stored and made known to us, is not this one very prominent, that she was hurried away suddenly and without warning

* Eccles. xii. † Eccles. xi.

from the midst of us: struck down in the bustle of her unfinished work and carried away to her grave? You well know, dear brethren, how true and loyal a servant she was to our Blessed Lord; and surely we might have expected much leniency and some privilege to be vouchsafed to her. And yet, observe how death is allowed to deal with her. Three short days are the respite granted to her to set her house in order; three short days to prepare for the journey which can only be made once; three days to make ready for the last battle that must be final and decisive, and can never be fought again; three days to get together the stock and provision that she is to take hence for the long eternity; above all, three days to prepare the strict account that she must give of seventy years of life; for, "after death, the Judgement."* "Give an account of thy stewardship,"† is a part of the summons brought by God's angel; and all the works and words, and all the innumerable thoughts that have been bubbling up within the mind without ceasing all the days of so long a life, are all carefully registered for scrutiny; and now in three days the precious must be separated from the vile, as the Prophet counsels.‡ But why do I speak of three days, brethren? For, in reality, how many working hours can be rescued out of these short days? For, in the first place, when death steals in so suddenly and so silently, who is willing at first to believe that it is come? The hours are slipping by swiftly, but the doomed one is engrossed with sanguine hopes of recovery. Again, the three days allowed are, after all, three days of mortal illness, when the corruptible body more than ever oppresses the

* Heb. ix. † Luke xvi. ‡ Jer. xv.

soul, and when, even if the spirit be willing, the body is very weak and helpless. And lastly, during all these three days, the physician in the spirit of kindness is striving by his medicines to prevent or to alleviate pain by bringing on stupor and drowsiness. Alas! then, if the preparation has to be begun now, what wonder that many, when God's coming Judgement starts up before them, sadly reply: "I cannot answer him one thing for a thousand";* and giving up the effort, "call upon the mountains to fall upon them and the hills to cover them."† Most emphatically then, as I said, this death-scene impresses upon us that our Blessed Lord does come "like a thief," "at the hour we think not," and therefore that it is absolutely necessary to be ready.

But I said, moreover, brethren, that it puts this lesson before us in a *persuasive form*, so that we are inclined to listen to it. For oftentimes this word, "Be ready," is a most unwelcome word, and we turn away abruptly from it; *first*, because we look upon it as an impracticable counsel, an impossible word, since we have a strong impression on our minds that to make ready for death just at the present moment is beyond us; that we require more leisure, less distraction, less business, more quiet of mind—at all events different circumstances from those we are in to-day; and, *secondly*, because we believe that even if we could mix up preparation for death with the business of life, the thought would cast a gloom over life, paralyse action, and unfit us for the work we have to do in this world.

Now, brethren, to both these difficulties we have, I think, a present answer in the death-bed

* Job ix. † Luke xxiii.

of your faithful and well-beloved friend. For, in the first place, you could not well desire a more plain and palpable instance than you have before you in her case of the difference between a sudden death and an unprovided death. Our Lord has carried out His warning to the letter; He has come when not expected, when she was in the midst of her holy work, when her exuberant gladness of heart gave us no manner of forewarning; and yet here is a death for which the most thorough preparation has been made. Here is a death in which the indications of a merciful and loving Providence and of a special privilege and predilection are so many and so striking, that when we find the witnesses of her death and the crowd around her funeral passing the word from one to another: "This is a glorious death!" "This is the death of the just!" "May our poor souls have grace like this!" we cannot help feeling that this voice of the people is the voice of God; that this is a true instinct, such as that of the children who cried, "Hosanna!"—such as that of the crowd on Calvary, who went home full of salutary thoughts, and saying: "Indeed this was a just man!"*

For after all, brethren, if, when a man is struck down in the very act of sin we are chilled with fear, and say: "This is terrible! This is an appalling judgement!" what are we to think when we see her cut off in the very midst of a most solemn act of homage to the Vicar of Christ, under circumstances of so much privilege, at a time so acceptable, in the days of such special grace and salvation, and in a place so blessed? At any time, indeed, Rome is to the eye of faith the sacred city, the sepulchre of the

* Luke xiii.

holy apostles and martyrs, the centre of the Christian world, the home of Christian hearts; but just at present Rome has a special charm for the just who live by faith. The city of St Peter is grown more hallowed and more dear because it is profaned and desecrated, because it seems in part given up to "the abomination of desolation,"* and has thus put on a closer resemblance to the Holy City on Mount Sion in those days of grace when Jesus suffered and died there. For Rome has at present its Hall of Pilate, its palace for Herod and Herodias, and its princes of darkness and its scribes and rulers egging on the populace to cry out that they will have no king but Cæsar; and its Barabbas, more acceptable than the Lord and His Vicar; and round about the Vatican is heard from time to time the cry: "Away with him! Away with him!" But, as I have said, all this only makes Rome the more venerable to those who believe and love, and the present moment more like that special day of grace on Calvary. Now this being so, dear brethren, if on Mount Calvary our Lord was moved to such unbounded gratitude and such an incredible outpouring of mercy because at the eleventh hour the Good Thief came round to his side, and in the midst of the universal howl of blasphemy lifted up his voice to utter that protest, "This Man hath done no evil," what are we to look for in the case of your departed friend? It is the same Jesus who sees her at the end of her long life of devotedness forgetting the claims of old age and failing strength; sees her setting at naught the prudence of this world and the hostile war-cry raised by the princes and powers of evil against the Lord's anointed; sees her

* Dan. ix.

adopt cordially the folly of the Cross, and set out on this impolitic pilgrimage in order to take her stand upon the Vatican hill beside the Vicar of the Crucified; looks on her with ineffable complacency as she becomes a spectacle "to the world, to angels, and to men," while in the face of her country and in the face of Europe she utters her protest: "We indeed deserve the just recompense of our deeds, but the Vicar of Christ has done no evil." Are you surprised, brethren, that our Blessed Saviour should look on her and love her, and say to her: "This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise"?* Suddenly the angel of death comes and whispers the good tidings: "The Bridegroom is coming; go forth to meet Him." †

There is, of course, a moment of surprise; there is a mother's pang as she turns her heart towards her children and her large family of poor and her many friends who shared her works and looked up to her as children; for He who had his own Mother by His side when He died—Jesus, the Son of Mary—it is no part of His plan to deaden or destroy those sacred feelings that He Himself has planted in the heart. Yes, there are tears and prayers and blessings for those she leaves in the land of banishment, but you may be sure that from the depth of her heart she humbly and gratefully made answer to the angel's summons in her favourite ejaculation: "Fiat voluntas tua—Thy will be done, my God"; and fully recognized the grace vouchsafed to her. For but a very few days before she had, in an outpouring of her gladness, written the words: "Out of Heaven there is no place like Rome." Now if these are

* Luke xxiii. † Matt. xxv.

her words to a friend on earth, it will take little preparation to dispose her soul to say to her God the prayer of holy Simeon: "Now Thou dost dismiss Thy servant in peace, since my eyes have seen Thy salvation."* And so "she fell asleep in the Lord,"† a pilgrim to the Holy See; a martyr or witness of the great dogma round which the war is raging; during the days of grace between Ascension and Pentecost; with the *evviva* of the Month of Mary that gladdened her so much still ringing in her ears; under the hand of the Vicar of Christ stretched out in blessing; with the representative bishops of England around her; and with the charity of the Roman people, who so well know how to make that prayer of faith which saves the sick, awakened in her behalf, and their tears flowing for her as if she had been one of their household. Surely, brethren, except the palm of martyrdom, it would be difficult to plan a death more blessed. No wonder that her fears were few. The bystanders well knew the meaning of the word she spoke when told that her confessor was come: "I am always glad to make my confession, but I hope all is right." This was her way of saying that but a day or two before, when no warning of death was yet come, she had, according to her constant custom, prepared her soul for the Blessed Eucharist by a careful confession and the holy absolution pronounced on earth and ratified, according to the promise of our Lord, in heaven. Am I not right then, brethren, in saying that this most edifying scene proves to us that death may be sudden yet well prepared; that it is quite possible to commingle preparation for death with the duties of life?

* Luke ii. † Acts vii.

But still the other difficulty to which I alluded remains to be solved. Does not the forethought of death cast a gloom on life? Does it not paralyse and unfit us for the business, or at least for the enjoyments, of life? The answer is ready on your lips, brethren. If I may borrow St John's words, you can bear witness to what you have heard, what you have seen with your eyes, what you have looked upon and what your hands have handled.*

What is your evidence? Was her life melancholy? Had she more dull days than her contemporaries? Had she not, to say the least, a good average share of sunny hours? Or rather, if we are to speak the full truth, was not her life characterized in a very marked way by joyousness and buoyancy of heart? Was there not in her soul a cheerfulness and serenity that spread itself among her companions and attracted the young to her, and made her so much at home among children when sharing their preparations for some festival-day? And is it not owing to this charm of her cheerfulness, and to the happiness it diffused around, that we now so often hear the words: "Her place is empty; who can fill it?"

"Nay, I must go further and ask whether we must not in some degree ascribe to her habitual gladness of heart both the loss you have sustained and the fact that her death seems to you so untimely and premature? Assuredly you have been misled by her hilarity and thrown off your guard. You quite forgot how long her struggle on this earth had already lasted, and how greatly she was worn. You forgot how feeble she was, and how unfit, according to

* 1 John i.

human prudence, to face the labours of this pilgrimage, and how much in accordance with natural laws it was that she should sink under them.

And I will add to this, dear brethren, another wonderful effect of her playful and child-like joyousness, which was that it concealed from our eyes how much maturity, how much aptitude for business, how many natural gifts, and, better than all this, how much charitable tact and management, how much meekness and long-suffering, how much courage and constancy, in fine, how much genuine holiness was hidden under an exterior so entirely unpretending. It is only now, when death makes revelations, and things hidden come to light, and friends interchange their thoughts and observations, that we become alive to the fact that we have had before our eyes a very striking instance of the way in which that triumphant grace of Christ Jesus, which gives to innocent children the maturity, the dignity, the majesty of venerable old age, can also teach those advanced in age and high in honour how to become like to Christ's little ones, of whom "is the kingdom of heaven." *

If this be so, is it not true that this death of your well-beloved friend puts also before you, both *emphatically* and *persuasively*, the truth that not only is it absolutely necessary to make ready for death, but that it is quite possible to make this preparation and still go on with all the business of life? Nay, more, does not the life and death of Cecil Lady Lothian prove more persuasively to us that the true work of preparation, so far from rendering life embarrassed and unhappy, has quite the opposite effect, so that there are

* Matt. xix.

none so fit to live and so fit to share not only the graver duties of life, but its innocent recreations too, as those whose souls are in their hands and ever ready for death?

And now, brethren, you will expect me to say something of the method she adopted to dispose herself for death.

My answer is ready. She chose the better part, the more excellent way.* The words in which St John describes our Lord's preparation for death will help me to make known to you the method she followed: "Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end." † A very strong love for Christ in the person of His poor, and a long and uninterrupted career of charity were, I think, her great preparation for a happy death. "Alms," said holy Tobias, as a parting word to his son, "deliver from sin and death, and will not suffer the soul to go into darkness. Alms is a great confidence before the Most High God to all those that give it." ‡ And the Psalmist had already written a kindred word, "Blessed is he who understands concerning the poor and the needy; in the evil day the Lord will deliver him. The Lord help him on his bed of sorrow. Thou hast turned all his couch in his sickness." §

You see then, brethren, our Blessed Saviour's plan; and you see what preparation for death means. A death is always well prepared if mercy comes to the death-bed; if our Lord at death and judgement does not "observe our iniquities," ‖ if our "iniquities are forgiven and our sins covered." ¶ Now we have His word for it that no notice will be taken at His judgement

* Luke x. † John xiii. ‡ Tob. iv. § Ps. xl. ‖ Ps. cxxix. ¶ Ps. xxxi.

even of grave sins committed, if they have been duly compensated and grace has been earned by works of mercy. I am not, I hope, dear brethren, saying anything more than our Lord and Master said Himself. "Woe to you, Pharisees," He exclaimed again and again; "woe to you: your inside is full of rapine and iniquity. But for the rest give alms and all shall be made clean to you." * So that in the end, if He is forced to say to the sinner, "Go from Me," the real cause of that sentence is that the sinner neglected to purchase, by works of mercy, grace that would have moved him to true repentance before his death. This is the short story of his ruin, uttered by the unerring lips of his most merciful and most just Judge: "Depart from Me, ye accursed . . . . for I was hungry, and you gave Me not to eat." †

Well then, brethren, to the dear friend whose loss you mourn, it was given, early in her life, to "understand concerning the poor and needy." She loved them, and she loved them to the end. The words of the Psalmist in the eighty-third Psalm may aptly be used to describe her long widowhood of forty years. She was "planning ascensions in her heart in this valley of tears," in the place and station which God had set for her; and the Lord the Lawgiver, who taught us the law of charity, gave a blessing, and she went on from one act of virtue to another; and now "the God of gods shall be seen in Sion." For she was still in the flower of her age when God, who wished to see the gold purified in the fire of tribulation, took from her what He had given, the husband to whom she was devotedly attached. But in His great mercy He gave her, as a con-

* Luke xi. † Matt. xxv.

solation in her bereavement, a very strong feeling of compassion for the poor. Others could tell you better the story of those early days of her widowhood when, clothed in homely attire, she used to be seen, with a stick in her hand, climbing the hills of Scotland to carry nourishment to some sick poor, not turning away even from those homes in which they lay plague-stricken, the victims of the dreaded cholera. I naturally confine myself to her career in the Catholic Church. But I may say that, from those early days to the day of her death, there was no change in her purpose. The poor became more and more a part of her household. As her own children grew up and required less of her immediate care, she had more leisure for the poor; and, as you know, the last great effort of her life, though mainly directed as an act of homage to the Holy See, was also an earnest endeavour to secure a large offering of vestments and altar furniture to be distributed by the Holy Father among poor, destitute missions.

But I am not ignorant, brethren, that a suspicion not unfrequently attaches to the good works of those in high station. Men are aware that our Lord has said that the poor are the blessed ones, and theirs is the kingdom of heaven. He has pronounced a woe against the riches and the honours of this world. And, consequently, we are apt to judge that those high in the world, though flattered on earth, though incense is offered to them by men and their names paraded, may yet hear from our Blessed Lord no warmer welcome than that sad word, "Amen, I say to you, that you have received your reward." *

* Matt. vi.

On this account I deem it edifying, and even necessary, to dwell a little on this subject, and to test as well as we can the charity of your departed friend.

And in the first place I am quite willing to confess that charity which is not in some way or other linked with the poverty of Christ requires much more careful scrutiny before we pronounce it to be the genuine fire-tried gold which our Lord values. But it is precisely because the charity of Lady Lothian was allied to Christian poverty, and bore upon its front the family features of the blessed poor, that I think we are safe in judging that it was not mere honorary charity, which does no real work, and merits only small reward; but was that true and genuine charity which is heaven-born and "beloved of God and men." *

In the first place, then, brethren, we know that constancy is the great feature of the work of the poor; they are not permitted to work by fits, and to rest when they will. Theirs is not a short season of amateur work followed by a long holiday. Toil is lifelong with them; it is their daily portion; their sabbath-days are few and exceptional. Now, brethren, you are the witnesses. Were works of mercy only an occasional amusement, a passing excitement with Lady Lothian, or were they her main business, her sacred duty and the staple of her life?

Secondly, on the occasion of the poor woman who cast her mite into the treasury, our Saviour pointed out another feature of the charity of the poor which makes their work so valued by Him: they give not out of their abundance, but out of their necessity. Now in more ways than one

* Ecclus xlv.

your beloved companion contrived notwithstanding her high position to give out of her necessity. For in the first place, to meet her ever-growing list of charities, she continually stinted herself and refused herself many comforts and indulgences which would have been justly judged by her friends to be suitable to her station, and at times needed by her weak health.

Again, like the poor, she gave out of her necessity, because she gave what cannot be given without being felt, the labour of her hands and great fatigue of body and the sweat of her brow. Like the courageous wife described in the Proverbs, she "put forth her hand to strong things, and her fingers have taken hold of the spindle." *

And so true and genuine was her love, not only for the poor of Christ, but for the poverty of Christ, that it was often noticed in her frequent visits to the convents of religious devoted to works of mercy how contented she was when allowed to do some menial work, to be her own servant, to make her own bed, and to do humble offices for the sick or the poor.

Again, dear brethren, the poor do not look for any great harvest of honour from their works. Their toil attracts little notice or commendation. Now those who were witnesses of the career of this Christian lady will well remember how utterly free from egotism and ambition her charity was. Being placed in a high position, she might, if she had been a worshipper of self, have wished to stamp her own image and superscription on her works, as kings do on their coin, but she never liked to stand alone or in pre-eminence; it was always her strong preference to

* Prov. xxxi.

be one of a group, to serve in the ranks, and she never was more tranquil and contented than when allowed to escape responsibility and work under the direction of some religious community of nuns, with no other care but to work efficiently. Is it easy, dear brethren, to find a better guarantee that charity is genuine than this contentment in subjection? Seeing that the story of our Blessed Lord's life of charity on the earth is shortly summed up in these words, "He was subject," "He was obedient unto death," it is not surprising that the masters of spiritual life set so much store on humble subjection as a touchstone of true virtue.

Lastly, brethren, the labour of the poor is labour that must not shrink from facing difficulties. If there is a mountain to be moved away, they are expected to spend themselves in doing it. Even so, as you must well remember, the tasks which Lady Lothian set herself were not the lighter fancy works of mercy, but heavy labours that required patient industry and endurance. If we trace the course of her charity by the monuments she has left behind—the graceful church at Jedburgh built by her while still an Anglican, followed afterwards by the Catholic mission founded there with its school and chapel; then the beautiful church of St David built at Dalkeith, with its presbytery and schools; the mission founded at Pathhead, its chapel and its school, and the preparations made for the establishment of another mission at Roslyn—all this, dear brethren, is not child's play, it is serious work that could never have been brought to a successful issue without much work, much fatigue, and much patient labour. And this can be said even more truly of the

works to which she devoted herself in London. God and His holy angels alone have the record of the number of the destitute children she helped to rescue in various parts of this vast metropolis from early corruption, and of the many hours she spent in wearisome work and real toil to help some struggling mission in the far East, or to find resources for a poor school in a destitute district, or to bring poor women together at the mothers' meetings. Again, God and His angels know, but we do not, to how many poor prisoners she brought consolation and holy hope that led to repentance by her visits to their prison cells, continued regularly and faithfully week after week through so many years; and not only by her own visits, but by the efforts of those whom she won over to share in this holy work.

Add to this the foundation of the home of refuge for poor women discharged from prison penniless and without good name, for which she toiled indefatigably till she saw it well established under the sure guidance of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. And if we turn from the prisons to the hospitals of London, there again only the watchful eye of God's fatherly care, which marks every hair that falls to the earth, noted how many poor sufferers were in these latter years soothed and saved from hopelessness by the regular visits made by members of that charitable hospital society which to a great extent owed its existence to her courageous charity and patient labour. And here again the same wise forethought that made her work to provide a home for the prisoners let out from prison led her also to labour without sparing herself until she saw established a similar home for the convalescent poor discharged from hospitals, lest in that

dangerous time of want and weakness which follows grievous illness, when they have not strength to earn their bread, they should lose all that body and soul has gained from the kind care bestowed in the hospital. Nor must I omit one of the chief anxieties of her closing years, to see devoted nurses secured for the destitute sick poor by the introduction into London of the nuns known as the Helpers of the Holy Souls.

Then call to mind too, dear brethren, the fatigue she underwent in her persevering efforts to find succour for the sufferers in that terrible war which laid France prostrate, and her equally generous and untiring exertions to provide consolations for the victims of that persecution which the statesmen of Germany waged against the Church. Some of you, moreover, have not, I think, forgotten how at that period when in the midst of these labours she was by accident thrown upon the pavement in front of the holy altar before which she so often knelt, and in consequence could no longer use her broken right arm to write her letters of charity, she continued still with her left hand to carry on her mission of mercy, and did not refuse in spite of that accident to undertake the journey to Germany, and, if I may so say, to enter the den of the lion, with no little risk of insult and hardship, in order to bear to the holy bishops who were confessors to the faith the sympathy and congratulations of Catholic England. If to this list of works of mercy we add in the last place her very favourite occupation of acting as an instructress, or, if you will, as a mother and friend to converts in the days of their loneliness after they have crossed the threshold of the Church, we shall, I think, admit that like the blessed

poor she had continually to confront difficulties and undergo real toil; and I may add that, like the poor, she faced this life of labour cheerfully. She accepted fatigue and great weariness as a necessary part of her contract with the Good Shepherd whom she was serving.

Neither ought I to omit that in a career like this there are sufferings more severe than bodily fatigue; there is weariness of soul, there are wounds of the heart, inseparable from a life of zeal. For if the Apostle truly said that "All who wish to live piously in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution,"* doubly and trebly true this word must be in regard of those who courageously devote themselves to the most divine of all divine works, that of rescuing the lost sheep and bringing them home. Like their heavenly Master, such are sure to be "a sign to be contradicted."† A thousand obstructions are contrived by the unseen princes of darkness; differences of opinion and misunderstandings multiply, during which escape from the tongue those sparks of fire of which St James tells how they soon change the fair plantation into a bare wilderness.‡ Well, brethren, at such moments the tempter is at hand to whisper the discouraging word: "To what purpose all this waste"§ of money, of time, of thought, of labour? Why lead a life that "is not like other men's"? and why follow ways so very different?‖ "Blessed" —thrice blessed at such a critical moment when God's interests and the welfare of poor souls are in jeopardy—thrice "blessed are the meek" who "possess their souls in patience"; they will "join themselves to God and endure, and in their hu-

* 2 Tim. iii. † Luke ii. ‡ Jas. iii.
§ Matt. xxvi. ‖ Wisd. ii.

miliation keep patience,"* and in the end through meekness shall possess the land.†

You have not, I am sure, forgotten, dear brethren, how meekly your departed friend and fellow-worker bore herself in presence of such difficulties, even as the blessed poor do; how little of personal sensitiveness or resentment she ever revealed; how well she knew how to speak the mild and pleasant word that breaketh wrath.‡ And even when most wounded by any contrariety that prejudiced the cause of her poor, yet still "the law of clemency was on her lips,"§ and it was no part of her simple apostleship to "pull down as well as to build up, to root up as well as to plant"‖—I mean to destroy the work of others in order to exalt her own, or rashly to tear up the good wheat in an undisciplined effort to pluck up the noxious weed.

Through her patient meekness, then, which conquered difficulties, her charity bore upon its front the stamp of resemblance to the blessed poor of Christ. And from what I have said you will see at once, dear brethren, how it also possessed another characteristic required by our Lord in genuine charity; for you remember His word: "Unless the grain of corn shall fall upon the earth and die, it remaineth alone"—that is, it will be sterile and unproductive—"but if it die it shall bear much fruit."¶ For it must, I think, be pretty clear from what I have been saying that the charity of your dear companion was perpetually intertwined with sacrifice of self, and for this very reason was productive of much fruit. And, indeed, those who had opportunities of watching her—not only during what I may

* Ecclus ii. † Matt. v. ‡ Prov. xv. § Prov. xxxi.
‖ Jer. i. ¶ John xii.

call her public life of charity, but in her private domestic and inward life—will bear testimony to her continual war against self-indulgence. She certainly was not one of that class who were discarded from the army of the Lord by Gedeon because they lay down to drink at their leisure the pleasant waters and refresh their bodies at their ease, but rather one of the chosen few who gathered the few drops necessary in the hollow of their hands and lapped them in haste as they stood, ready to move forward to their work.* The comforts of this world she used most sparingly and "as if she used them not."† The help of a carriage, for instance, which would have so much facilitated her continually recurring expeditions in the cause of Christ's poor, she would not permit herself, except during a short period of the year when she wished to show courtesy and kindness to her many relations and friends who visited London. And in her frequent visits to the religious with whom she loved to sojourn to learn new lessons in the science of holiness, one of her objects was to find out some new practices of penance and austerity, such as we read of in the lives of the saints, which she might prudently adopt. For she earnestly desired by such penitential exercises to win mercy for poor sinners; and she did not forget the words of our Blessed Saviour, that there are devils which "can go out by nothing but by prayer and fasting."‡

Her life, then, was one of continual and severe self-denial and of penance; the more admirable, I think, for two reasons: first, because, as you know, she was in the position described by Ecclesiasticus: "She could have transgressed" if she so willed, "but did not";

* Judges vii. † 1 Cor. vii. ‡ Mark ix.

she "could have done evil, and did not."* She had both ample means and special opportunities for self-indulgence had she been so minded, as she could not only furnish herself with every luxury, but moreover, as her children were now engaged in their own careers, she necessarily lived isolated and independent and unfettered, and being often weak in health could easily enough have found reasons and excuses for self-indulgence. Now, brethren, the Holy Ghost declares in the passage last quoted that the man who can thus live in the daily opportunity of transgressing without transgressing is a man who "has worked wonders in his lifetime." Surely then, in a lady brought up to luxury, such self-control and abstinence is not less a marvel. And observe what I have said, dear brethren, that her loneliness and isolation would naturally render such a life of self-denial more difficult. In religious communities, where the good things of this world are not abundant, and where a certain amount of self-denial is the order of the day and good example is contagious, it is more easy to persevere in a life of hardship and self-restraint. Once become an inmate of a monastery, it costs comparatively little to our nature to do without pleasures which are not present to tempt the appetite, and which all those around us willingly forego. And even in family life the presence of others is often a powerful check to self-indulgence and a great encouragement to sacrifice. Hence with reason Ecclesiastes wrote that word: "It is better that two should be together than one: for they have the advantage of their society; if one fall he shall be supported by the other. Woe to him

* Ecclus xxxi.

that is alone, for when he falleth he hath none to lift him up."* Being then, as I have said, both quite lonely and at the same time able to command indulgences, her life of temperance and sacrifice is all the more remarkable and meritorious.

The second point that renders this life of sacrifice admirable is that, as I have before said, self-conquest and her war against corrupt nature did not in her destroy brightness and joyousness. She was "the cheerful giver" whom God loves.† Now, from the masters in spiritual life, we know that to be able to make sacrifices with ease and cheerfulness is as sure a mark of proficiency in holiness as ease and rapid execution on an instrument is of proficiency in music. As, therefore, the grain did die, as she did daily die to self, albeit not helped by circumstances, but on the contrary in spite of her circumstances, and as she died to self without growing morose or moody over her sacrifices, have we not good ground to think that hers was that true heavenly love that does not count the cost?

And now, brethren, there is another test which I will apply to her life of charity. The devout author of the *Imitation* lays down the rule for us all: "Whatever happens to others, do not neglect thyself"; and our Blessed Saviour enforced a similar rule in the case of His apostles; for He would not suffer them to enter on the work of their apostleship till they had continued shut up in retirement in the upper chamber, attending to their own spiritual wants, and until they were endowed with power from heaven.

Well, brethren, in the career of your departed

* Eccles iv, 10. † 2 Cor. ix.

friend you observe a persevering fidelity in the care of her own soul; for her fervour and constancy in the discharge of her spiritual duties were, I think, as conspicuous as her generous devotion to the poor, and on this ground also I conclude that her charity was not any mere result of temperament, but a great grace given by her Father in heaven.

For the last twenty years it was her habit to retire every summer for eight days to the Convent of the Sacred Heart, to make the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius, in order to wash away the dust and the stains of the past time and to regulate more perfectly the time to come. It will be well remembered by many of you, dear brethren, how welcome this week of retreat was to her; how she looked forward to it as a time of special grace and happiness; with what a true hunger and thirst for justice she each year gave herself anew to all the exercises, so that no child in the schools could be more docile and more faithful to all the arrangements and discipline of convent life than she was. No wonder that God spoke to her heart in such solitude, and that she came forth from the retreat grown in grace before God and man,* with "the light of God's countenance" stamped upon her;† and no wonder that each year she was seen to persevere so faithfully in the practices she had resolved upon.

I have already mentioned how she expressed on her deathbed some difficulty as to what she could find to tell her confessor. This is not surprising if we remember that during so long a term of years she seldom spent more than a very few days without having recourse to the Sacrament of Penance to wash away those daily faults that

* Luke ii. † Ps. iv.

holy souls discover, and those less united to God heed not. Moreover, a frequent subject of her conversation with the nuns she loved to visit was on the best means of improving in self-examination. At the same time it was often observed by those more intimate with her how little she appeared to know of ordinary spiritual troubles and temptations. It seemed as if her self-imposed toil for the poor served instead of all other purifying processes, and the promise of holy writ was verified that "alms shall obtain help for thee against all evil." * A kindred testimony came accidentally from an unexpected quarter. An experienced physician, called in on one occasion to attend her, observed afterwards how it did him good to note her countenance, "which bore testimony to every passion being subdued, as every line on her face was good, and showed that the battles were over and had been won." In the same direction pointed the evident pain and distress caused to her by the bare mention of those vices which St Paul says are not to be named amongst us.

From all these converging evidences the natural conclusion is that the calm of her soul at death was the result of the absence of sin; for "Sin is the sting of death."† Indeed, from every part of the sketch of her life that I am trying to put before you, the conviction is forced upon us that the fire of charity had warmed and purified her soul and left her singularly innocent: one of that blessed race concerning which the inspired writer exclaims: "How beautiful is the chaste generation! the memory thereof is immortal: it is recognized both by God and by men, who when it is present imitate it, and they desire it

* Ecclus xxix, 15. † 1 Cor. xv.

when it hath withdrawn itself." * Yes, you know well, brethren, how she attracted many to imitate her virtue in life, and I surely need not tell you how you yearn for her now that she is withdrawn from you.

By a constant use, then, of the Sacrament of Penance, and by regular self-examination, as well as by almsdeeds and works of mercy, which the Holy Spirit assures us "deliver us from all sin," she acquired and preserved cleanness of heart, and you know what our Saviour said of the clean of heart: "Blessed are the clean of heart, they shall see God." If she then took such constant pains to secure cleanness of heart, was it not to be expected that she should receive such an increase of the light of faith as would enable her to see God in prayer and hear His voice? and, consequently, it is not surprising that prayer became so welcome to her. When we are not clean of heart God is silent, as He was to Herod, and then prayer is a burden; but to her, who was permitted to "taste and see that the Lord is sweet," † it was not so difficult to conquer nature and rise at an early hour for prayer, and to remain, as she had been often seen to do, as long as three hours before the Blessed Sacrament before she tasted food. And being clean of heart, it was equally a consequence that she should see our Blessed Lord in His mysteries, and hence it comes that the festivals and holy seasons of the year so visibly affected and impressed her. But, above all, the Blessed Eucharist and the Holy Mass became to her like the sun in the heaven, the solace and the great necessity of her life. I think that we should not be wrong in assuming that for many years

* Wis. iv. † Ps. xxxiii.

neither the cold of winter nor late hours at night, sometimes inevitably occasioned by her position, ever hindered her from assisting every morning at the Holy Sacrifice. Add to this that in the latter years of her life, when the anti-Christian outbursts on the Continent had reduced so many priests to beggary, her strong sense of the ineffable value of the Holy Sacrifice made her add to her other countless charities the practice of sending frequent alms abroad to secure a Mass for every day of the year to beg graces and blessings for those whose welfare she had at heart. And on the very last day before she lay down on her bed to die, she tired out her strength in an effort to reach a distant church, where she had heard that she might enjoy the great privilege of assisting at a large number of Masses offered up simultaneously at its many altars, and joining in spirit with them all. To those who witnessed all this love for our Lord in His holy altar it was no surprise to find that the wish of the Fathers of the Council of Trent was fulfilled in her, inasmuch as she was judged worthy, on account of the purity and holiness of her life, to receive every morning the sacred Body of our Lord in the Holy Eucharist, so that it was indeed her daily bread, and took the place of those poor earthly pleasures which to many seem so necessary, but which our blessed Saviour reckons as the mere husks of swine. On this point I will only add that in keeping with her devotion to the Blessed Eucharist was her veneration for all the Offices of holy Church, and her never-tiring wish to learn more and more of God and the mysteries of faith. That counsel of Ecclesiasticus seemed engraven in her soul: "Stand in the multitude of ancients who are wise, and join thyself from

thy heart to their wisdom, that thou mayest hear every discourse of God, and that the sayings of praise may not escape thee." * Whenever a chance was offered to her of learning either from the pulpit, or the platform, or from the devout books written by holy men, something more about our Lord, His Virgin Mother, His saints, or His holy Church, she was eager to avail herself of "every such discourse of God," and "that the sayings of praise should not escape" her.

Laid up in her heart she had that truth inculcated by our Lord on the last evening of His life on earth: "I am the vine, you the branches: he that abideth in Me and I in him the same beareth much fruit." † There is, as you know, dear brethren, a kind of philanthropy that professes to be able to live and work without being endowed with power from above, and that philanthropy is now-a-days much belauded, and a very active propagandism is on foot with the avowed object of exalting it, and enshrining it in the place of the queen of virtues, heaven-born charity. Whence this agitation originated it is not hard to discover, for in the Book of Job we read how eager the father of all lies is that men should believe that they need not depend on their Creator. Pleasant and dear to him is a cry, like that of the Jews: "We have no king, no master, no lord, no God but Cæsar, and Cæsar's master," that is himself, the Fallen Angel. Your loved companion wisely preferred to believe that every good gift must come from above. Her charity, as her hope, was based on her faith, and her faith was the faith of St Peter, to whom our Lord said: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not re-

* Ecclus vi. † John xv.

vealed it to thee, but My Father who is in heaven." * To abide in all her works under "the aid of the Most High, and the protection of the God of Jacob," † was her first desire. I well remember how perseveringly for a long time together, in days gone by, she besought the prayers of the members of the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart that our Lord, the Good Shepherd, might bless her work in Scotland, and send pastors to her missions who would spread with zeal the fire He came to light on the earth; and it was so to the end, for in the extremity of her weakness, in the last hours of life, she could still be heard attempting to call down the aid of heaven by her favourite invocation to the Blessed Mother of God, *Mater admirabilis, ora pro nobis*, and by the sacred names, Jesus, Mary, Joseph.

You see then, dear brethren, how there is a consistency throughout her life; how her charity bears being tested, and that the more we do test it the more ready we are to believe that it was not spurious, but real and genuine; that better gift, in fact, that excellent gift, won for man by the death and passion of Christ Jesus; that "charity of God poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost," ‡ of which there are so many counterfeits, and without which, as blessed St Paul writes, "I am nothing." §

There is but one other feature of the true charity of Jesus Christ on which I would wish to add a word. I have already alluded to that sentence of our Blessed Lord: "The grain, if it die in the earth, bringeth forth much fruit"; and that other word of His: "He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit." Whenever, therefore, zeal and charity are genuine, we

* Matt. xvi. † Ps. xc. ‡ Rom. v. § 1 Cor. xiii.

ought to see them bear a harvest of good fruit. Now I think, dear brethren, that though I have been able to give you but a very incomplete sketch of the work which Lady Lothian accomplished for the poor of Christ, yet you know quite enough to justify you in saying that there was truly a harvest of good fruit, and that God gave a great increase.* Wherever she lived, whether in England, the land of her birth, or in Scotland, the land of her adoption, you find in the churches she built and the chapels and schools, you find in the prisons, the hospitals, the orphanages, and the houses of the poor, such a monument left behind her that we may rest assured that she will be in "everlasting remembrance," † since, though men should forget on earth, our Blessed Lord in heaven will not forget. Never for an instant throughout eternity will His grateful Heart slumber or sleep, but will ever be fully awake and watching for new opportunities and new modes of proving the truth of the word He spoke, "As long as ye did it to the least of My little ones, ye did it to Me." You remember, brethren, how, with a boundless gratitude, He pledged Himself that Magdalen's act of charity to Him should never be forgotten so long as His Gospel was preached; what, then, shall happen to one who, like your dear companion, has, with a far-reaching forethought and by years of patient industry, left behind her so many solid and stable institutions, which will live on as perennial running fountains of grace to the poor when our generation is long gone by? As long as church and chapel and school and orphanage and other kindred institutions continue here on earth her apostleship, and our Blessed Saviour

* 1 Cor. i. † Ps. cxi.

sees soul after soul mount up from this desert, to whose salvation she has lent a helping hand, will He not again and again and for ever and for ever say from His divine heart, "Give her of the fruits of her hands,"* for she hath done it all to Me?

The true charity of Christ, then, brethren, bears fruits and not short-lived fruits, but everlasting fruits that will survive and be fresh throughout eternity.

And another of its properties is that it can bear fruit in every climate, for it is Catholic and not confined to one township or one clan; so that of true charity, as of the true faith, you can say that its motto is *semper et ubique*. It reaches to every land, and bears fruit to live throughout all ages. So it was with the charity of this faithful servant of our Lord; she aimed at everlasting results, and at the same time her heart was truly Catholic and could feel for every one in need, no matter what his country or his class. To the Irish, both in their own country and when she mingled with them here, she was as much a mother and as much at home with them as she was with her own people in England or Scotland. This you well know; but what you do not perhaps know is that her loss will be mourned in the distant foreign missions as well as by the poor at home and by the sufferers in Italy and Germany. For several years she has been encouraging by her alms and her kind letters the work going on in China and in India for the salvation of the poor; and to some of her intimate friends it will be known how, when she read of the exceptional sufferings of one of those poor priests exiled to Siberia by Russian perse-

* Prov. xxxi.

cution, she set to work to find out his place of imprisonment, and did not rest till her alms had reached him also.

I have said, moreover, that she could feel for the wants of every class as for the wants of every country. Of her labours for the poor I have spoken sufficiently, and you, dear brethren, know better than I do, or than any one else, what a zeal she had to rescue Catholic ladies of the upper classes from what holy Scripture calls the "bewitching of trifling," * and to induce them to live for eternity, and to devote their talents and resources and their influences under the banner of the Blessed Mother of God and in union with the Sacred Heart of our divine Master, to the proper work of all Christians, which is, to win grace and mercy for themselves by helping others to arrive at grace and mercy. And it was because her zeal and charity were so well known to you that you wished to have her as the president of your sodality of the Children of Mary.

I have just mentioned the Sacred Heart of our Blessed Lord, and am thus reminded of an incident in her life which I ought not to pass over in silence, as it may, I think, have contributed in no small degree to the lasting fruit produced by her charity and to the joyousness which helped her to persevere to the end in such unceasing labours, by drawing her more closely to the fountain of all true zeal and charity, the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It is now about fifteen years since our Lord gave her the consolation of assisting at the holy death of her eldest daughter, who died a professed religious of the Order of the Sacred Heart. And as she watched one day by the sick-bed, her child unexpectedly took her

* Wisd. iv.

hand along with that of the Reverend Mother of the convent, and said, "Reverend Mother, if ever she can be of use will you be sure to let mama help you? And, mama, if ever you are in sorrow, will you be sure to let Reverend Mother be a friend to you?" Always docile and childlike as Lady Lothian was, and willing to be guided, these words could not but sink deep into her heart, and from that day to the time of her death her special delight was to be with the religious consecrated to the service of the Sacred Heart, to aid in their apostleship, to learn from them how to draw all things to Him, and to cast abroad the fire which He so much wished to be enkindled. You already know, dear brethren, how it has been promised to those who love the Sacred Heart of Jesus that they shall have a salutary power over the hearts of others and shall bear much fruit. And to such also did Isaias the prophet speak when he uttered that other promise, "You shall drink waters in gladness from the fountains of the Saviour."* Have we not here, then, the secret of her success in her work of charity and of the gladness with which she persevered to the end?

And now you have seen, dear brethren, how this good friend and dear companion prepared for her enviable death by charity, by loving to the end, by charity linked hand in hand with poverty of spirit, self-sacrifice, submission and humility; by charity that was no let or hindrance to the business of life, and cast no gloom on her existence, since whatever it gave to Christ it gave ungrudgingly and gave with love, according to the teaching of the Holy Spirit, "If a man should give all the substance of his house for love, he

* Isa. xii.

shall despise it as nothing": in fine, by that conquering charity of Jesus Christ, "strong as death, many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it."*

What, therefore, remains for us to do but, while gratefully and trustingly commending her soul to the sweet mercy of God, to lay up at the same time in our own hearts the warning words of Wisdom: "The just that is dead condemneth the wicked that are living"?† This household example of a life of charity closing in an unexpected but truly blessed death is a great grace which God in His mercy has granted to us to convince and persuade us that we must prepare for death; that we can make an excellent preparation for death without detriment to the duties of life; and that the more we prepare by charity for a happy death, the more we shall taste of that true peace which Christ came to bring to this earth, and which the world cannot give, and the more fit we shall be to meet both the sorrows and the pleasures of this life. And it will, I think, give you courage, dear brethren, to rouse yourselves, to shake off desponding thoughts, and to be up and doing, if you keep in mind one thing that we notice in her case, namely, how each one who conquers is a benefactor to many more. By overcoming the world and self she has given courage to the weakness of many, and brought home to us the truth that sacrifice and self-conquest and charity is not only possible, not only tolerable, but the one kind of life in which there is any chance of our being able to carry out that rule prescribed by St Paul: "Rejoice in the Lord always: again I say rejoice," ‡ and securing for ourselves some

* Cant. viii. † Wisd. iv. ‡ Phil. iv.

share of that peace of God which he says "surpasseth all understanding." Even so, if you, my brethren, in your turn take courage, if you struggle, and if you fight a good fight and conquer, you will prove to others weaker than yourselves—who look up to you as you looked up to her—the true friend, the helpmate, and the good angel which she has proved to so many of you; and the day will come when others will bless your memory and say on earth, and say too at the judgement-seat, "It was through you and your example that we were undeceived and began "to think of the Lord in goodness." * It was your life and conversation that at last opened our eyes and made us see that indeed "the yoke of Christ is sweet and His burden light." It was through you we came to understand that not in harshness, not because He wished the death of the sinner, but simply and solely from the compassionate charity of His divine Heart, because He wishes to save us out of the snares laid for us, and to see us here on earth and through eternity true children of our heavenly Father, that He speaks so earnestly and so solemnly the word of friendly counsel: "Be you also ready, for in what hour you think not the Son of Man will come." Amen.

R. I. P.

Kind reader, pray for her soul and the souls of all the Faithful departed.

* Wisd. i.

V--Prince Louis Napoleon

Funeral Words spoken in his memory in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Farm Street, London, July 3, 1879.

Behold! A dead man was carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and much people of the city was with her. And when our Lord saw her, He had compassion on her, and said to her: Weep not. And He came near and touched the bier. And He said: Young man, I say to thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up and began to speak. And He delivered him to his mother. —LUKE vii, 12–15.

IT was not by chance, dear brethren, that our dear Lord arrived at the gates of Naim as this funeral was coming out. He had planned the meeting from eternity. Neither was it for the sake of those only that followed the bier that He was there. His divine Heart was ranging far beyond the limits of that hour and far beyond the borders of that one city. All time was present to Him, and every land, and all the generations of men, and each man's home. The maize-field of Africa, and the mourning-chamber in Kent, were as much before His all-seeing eye as the gates of that town of Galilee. And for the wounded body of the young Prince, and the crushed spirit of his bereaved and august mother, the divine Heart was planning as much as for the dead who lay upon the bier and the widowed mourner who followed it. The miracle He worked in that hour at Naim was only a type, a specimen of what He was to do daily and hourly

in His Church. It was as His sacraments are, an outward and visible sign from which we might learn what His unseen action is to be to the consummation of the world. There is not a holy Christian deathbed, there is not a hallowed funeral at which our Blessed Saviour Jesus does not assist, even as He stood by the bier at Naim. Whenever and wherever one of His servants is called away from the world, He is there. Even though no visible minister of His be present to do His office, Jesus Himself is there in time to anoint the parting soul, and to give it Viaticum for the long journey.

Yes; He is there to watch, to see that death do no harm either to him whose race on earth is run, or to the bereaved ones left yet a little while in this world to weep. I say that our Lord is there to watch and control the work of death. For, as you know, brethren, He conquered death. This was one great part of His mission. And hence, in the days of old, He had by the mouth of His prophet exclaimed: "O death, I will be the death of thee."* Accordingly, when the fulness of time was come, upon the hill of Calvary, "Death and life," as Holy Church sings in her Easter hymn, "joined in stupendous strife"—*Mors et vita duello conflixere mirando.* And the Lord of life conquered death as He conquered all else in the world that was hostile to men. "Have confidence," He says to us, "for I have conquered."† Very true was that word He uttered before He died on Calvary: *Consummatum est*—"My work is done." For He had disarmed and vanquished death. In that hour He, the Author and Creator of life, He, the innocent Son of God, in whom sin and death had no part,

* Osee xiii, 14. † John xvi, 33.

drank to the very dregs all the bitterness of "bitter death"; * and, moreover, designedly and with set purpose, He planned that the sinless Mother should be there on Calvary and see Him die without being permitted to die herself. For she was to survive, full of grace indeed, but all lonely and desolate, and the very type of bereavement. What can death now do that it did not then do on Calvary?

You that are in charge of the mangled body of the young soldier, with its seventeen wounds upon it, go bear it to Mount Calvary and lay it down there beside the Body of Jesus, the Son of holy Mary. What do you find? Have you not wound for wound, and many over? Go, too, and find the disconsolate mother, and lead her silently to Calvary, and set her beside the Mother already there, and say: Which of the two is the bruised heart, lonely and crushed, bowed down and desolate? In the sinless Mother, as in the divine Son, death has done its worst; but death is entirely conquered. And since that hour, from the dead Body of Jesus and from the agonized heart of His Blessed Mother, a virtue is ever coming out to anoint and soothe the wound that death inflicts, whether on the one that is called away or in the aching hearts of those who are left behind.

Nay, brethren, is it not quite true to say that since that hour when Jesus died on Calvary and Mary saw Him die the wounds on the body of a faithful Christian soldier have lost their ghastliness, and are embalmed and made quite beautiful, so that if his silent lips might speak, he would say: "Weep not, mother, 'for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus'"? † And

* 1 Kings xv, 32. † Gal. vi, 17.

so too, in like manner, since that hour on Calvary, the Christian mother weeping by the bier is become blessed and privileged and to be envied, since she is made so like the Mother of sorrows, the blessed among women, full of grace. "I shall draw all things to Myself," our Blessed Saviour said with unspeakable consolation in His Heart, "as soon as I shall be lifted from the earth." * The dying will turn his eye to Me and be saved; the broken-hearted mourner will look to Calvary and find peace. "Behold, I make all things new," † and have entirely changed the character of death. Hence it was, dear brethren, that the faithful apostle St Paul, so proud of his divine Master and the Cross of his Lord Jesus, exclaims, exulting in the work done on Calvary: "O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" ‡ And he took great pains to make the children of the early Church understand well the change wrought in the character of death by the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord. You are familiar with his words to the faithful of Thessalonica: "We will not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that you sorrow not even as others who have no hope." §

"Others who have no hope," brethren! Oh, take away Christian hope—that is, take away Jesus Crucified, and the Blessed Mother of Sorrows; take away Calvary and the Cross, the tomb and the chamber of *Maria desolata*—and then, indeed, at the coming of death the dying son and the forlorn mother would have nothing left but to wring their hands and cry, Woe is me! "Of all men we are the most miserable." ‖ Take

* John xii, 32. † Apoc. xxi, 5. ‡ 1 Cor. xv, 55.
§ 1 Thess. iv, 12. ‖ 1 Cor. xv, 19.

away our Christian hope, and there is not in human language a word sad enough to express the work of death. Who can wonder that the man of this world—the pagan man, the hopeless man—is simply dismayed, and stunned, and seized with blank despair when death comes in sight? The Holy Ghost describes for us in the Book of Wisdom how men without Christian hope are affected when they look on death even in its brightest form—the death of the just. "To the unwise," so it is written, the blessed just "seemed to die, and their departure hence was taken for misery, and their going away from us for utter destruction." * Yes, in good truth, misery and utter destruction death would be were there no Christian hope, no Calvary, no crucifix, no *Stabat Mater:* that is, no Death and Passion of Christ Jesus, no sword of sorrow for His Blessed Mother. If man is to have no heaven but that poor peace he finds in his possessions here, then no wonder, O Death, that thy memory is so bitter.† But now that we have seen what passed on Calvary, now that the Passion and Death of Christ are for ever present before our eyes and shedding their virtue over us from the holy altar, the old pagan idea of death is "swallowed up in victory"; ‡ the very name is not to be heard among us. Lazarus, the friend and disciple of Christ, "is not dead, but sleepeth." § St Paul speaks to his children, not of the dead, but of them that are asleep. Even when the Christian falls, as the first martyr fell, with many more wounds upon his body than were counted on the body of the brave young Prince, the inspired writer does not record

* Wisd. iii, 2. † Ecclus xli, 1. ‡ 1 Cor. xv, 54. § John xi, 11.

that he died, but that he "fell asleep in the Lord." *

If this be so—if Christian death be but a passing sleep; if our Lord Jesus is still standing by the bier and counting the moments till He can say the word: "Young man, arise"; if the child with his closed eyes and silent lips is saying to his mother, as his Master said: "A little while," a very little while, "and you shall see Me"; † if Christian death is nothing but a summons for one to go home to-day with the certainty that the other is to follow to-morrow—then surely Christians have no cause to say, when the call comes, those words of the pagan king: "*Siccine separat amara mors?* Does bitter death separate in this way?" ‡ For beyond all doubt the valley of tears is not our fixed abode. If therefore ten thousand voices are ever telling us that our home is not here—if each night that closes in and brings us sleep, if the termination of each week and month and wintry day that ends each year, if the ever-changing seasons, the falling leaf, the blighted blossoms, the fruit decayed, the burying of the seed in the ground to rise again, if the figure of death that is ever crossing our path as we see the birds of the air, the fishes of the sea, the beasts and the countless creeping things lie strewn in death around us; if added to all this tolling of the funeral bell and the frequent passing of the hearse, the warning marks of disease upon our friend, the pains of our own body and the anguish of our soul, and the many household disappointments and disasters sent to wean our grovelling hearts from the contentment offered them here below, are all only echoes of that in-

* Acts vii, 59. † John xvi, 16. ‡ 1 Kings xv.

ward voice which St Paul calls the *responsum mortis*, that deep-rooted and immovable and ingrained conviction in our souls that not on this earth is there rest for us, but that we must perforce quickly follow whither our dear ones are gone before—then, in this case, where, O Death, is thy victory?

The dying child and the weeping mother must both say the words so often uttered at the altar: "*Quare tristis es, anima mea?* Why art thou sad, my soul? Why dost thou trouble me? Hope in thy God," who stands by watching death, and says to thee: "Weep not"; says to thee: "Why dost thou doubt?" says: "It is I: fear not";* says: "The chalice which My Father hath mingled, shall I not drink it?"†

Is it then so sad a thing, Christian mother, for your loved one to go a little while before you back to his God? Is it a melancholy moment, that in which the disciple says with his Master: "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit,"‡ and passes from this world of temptation, of passion, of fraud, of faithlessness, of malice, and of sin, into that home which Jesus has been preparing for so long a time for him? Of that home it is that we have the revelation that there "God shall wipe all tears away, and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away."§ It is of that home that holy Job tells us: "There the wicked cease to trouble, there the weary find repose."‖ In that home—that home of God and of man His image and His child—we shall see and know our Father, God, and His Eternal Son, our Brother and Saviour

* Luke xxiv, 36. † John xviii, 11. ‡ Luke xxiii, 46.
§ Apoc. xxi, iv. ‖ Job iii, 17.

Jesus Christ, and never again for one instant shall we be afraid to be near them and look on their face; and never for an instant cease to love them with that perfect love described by the apostle of love, the blessed St John: "Fear is not in charity, but perfect charity casteth out fear."* In that home there shall never be the agony of parting; no night shall ever come to put an end to joy; no morrow shall bring sad change or disappointment. No moth, no worm, no whisperer is there to canker our bliss; no thief can rob us of it. Time cannot wear out our appetite and relish for the boundless varieties of perfect happiness which our Creator is for ever unfolding before us. If this be so, "*Quare tristis es, anima mea?* Why are you sad, my soul?" because the child of your heart has gone a little while—only a little while—before you to his home?

If Prince Louis, then, had lived and died devoid of Christian faith and Christian hope, his death would have been what the unwise think death to be. His departure would have been misery, and "his going away from us utter destruction." But of him, and of all who have the faith and hope of Christ within them, the Holy Spirit of God pronounces: "They are at peace." "To the unwise they seem to die, but they are at peace. And though in the sight of men they suffered torments, their hope is full of immortality. Afflicted in few things, in many they shall be well rewarded: because God hath tried and found them worthy of Himself. As gold in the furnace He hath proved them, and as a victim of a holocaust he hath received them."†

My brethren, perchance some one will chide

* 1 John iv, 18. † Wisd. iii, 2-6.

my words as rash and presumptuous, and say that I am forgetting the discretion and sincerity of a minister of Christ, to speak the flattering phrases of a courtier.

Far be it from me, brethren, to profane the holy sanctuary by any departure from sacred truth, or to dishonour the living and the dead by uttering unbidden prophecies or visions not inspired. I do not forget that between our departed friends and us the merciful Providence of God has hung a veil which none of us is permitted to draw aside. Occasionally, at distant intervals, to the great High Priest alone of Christ's Church on earth it is given to glance behind that veil of the sanctuary and to make known to us something of the blissful condition of a canonized saint; but, as a rule, no messenger comes to bring us certain tidings as to how it fares with those gone from us. It is the charity of our God that has planned it so. It is good for the departed and good for us that we are not told the times and moments when our friends who have slept in the Lord have ceased to want our help. For the result is that the holy souls here on earth go on multiplying their prayers, their tears, their alms, their penitential deeds, and, most of all, their requiem masses for their dear ones; and so it comes to pass that they themselves spend their lives in acts of holy charity, and besides hastening the dawn of eternal Light for those they love, they lay up a precious store of mercy for the forgotten dead that have no faithful friends on earth to think of them.

Far be it then from us, dear brethren, to wish to violate the merciful ordinances of God's providence, or to utter rash, unholy oracles concerning them that sleep. But, brethren, as St

Paul charges us not to be ignorant concerning their condition, surely we are permitted and encouraged to conjecture soberly and wisely, and to bring together carefully from the story of their lives and deaths all those marks of grace and predestination which help us to a judgement as to how the tree has fallen, and on what side it shall lie for ever.*

For a moment then, brethren, let us glance at the short career of Prince Louis. For, hidden in privacy as it was, yet a few glimpses of light have reached us. And if a straw upon the waters suffices to tell the direction of the current, and if there be truth in that word that a man dies as he lives, perchance we have materials enough to warrant a wise conjecture that we may rightly class him with those of whom it is written: "To the unwise they seemed to die, but they are in peace."

First however, brethren, we must deal with a fact that is not hidden, but very public—not trivial, but most momentous. We must face that question, whispered in fear and trembling by loving friends: "Did he not die suddenly—very suddenly?" Yes, brethren; suddenly, very suddenly. What could be more sudden and surprising and unexpected than the news that spread so rapidly through Christendom, from north to south, from east to west: "The young Prince is killed in Africa"? No one had anticipated, no one was prepared for the tidings. Now, indeed, that the event has happened, we begin to wonder why, seeing the character of the African campaign, men had not forecast what might occur; but surely this is the fact, that there was no anticipation of this event. At least—to speak

* Eccles xi, 3.

more correctly—outside his own secret soul there was no such anticipation. I say outside his own secret soul, for now that our eyes have rested on that private document, made public only yesterday, which Prince Louis penned on the eve of his departure from our shores, who will venture to say that he had not sat down and counted the cost before he embarked on his perilous enterprise? Who will say that death was a sheer surprise to his soul, when we read the words of his last will and testament?

"I die in the Catholic, Apostolic, Roman faith.

"I hope that my mother will cherish towards me, when I shall be no more, affectionate remembrance such as I shall ever retain for her till my last moment.

"I shall die with a feeling of deep gratitude to her Majesty the Queen of England, to all the Royal Family, and to the country where I have met with such cordial hospitality.

"Of my arms and uniforms, the last that I shall have worn, I leave to my mother."

Had his good angel, brethren, visited him and warned him that he could be steward no longer,* what language could he have selected more fitting than those words? Who could believe that such words were penned by a youth full of bright expectations, in the very dawning of his manhood, in his day of vigour, in the buoyancy and hopefulness of his opening career? They are words such as a man would write when at last, after a long struggle against disease, the physician most reluctantly shakes his head and owns that he can do no more to ward off death.

Had Prince Louis not been matured to

* Luke xvi, 2.

thoughtfulness by the strange events crowded into his boyhood, and by that wise training which is found in the school of sorrow and adversity, how could he thus reverse in thought the laws of nature and seriously forecast what his mother would do for him when he is taken away? We can well believe, then, that one so provident, when in the spirit of faith he approached the holy altar before he entered on his work of danger there to eat the Bread of Life, would devoutly receive the blessed Body of our Lord as the viaticum for his great journey.

Be this however as it may, whatever of forewarning or forecast went on within his own soul, most certain it is that to his friends and to the Christian world his death was most sudden. But did the Christian people, therefore, judge it to be unprepared and unprovided? Did the startling news call forth any wail of despair from the children of the faith?

My brethren, I need not tell you the impression that the tidings made, for you know it. You have it fresh before your mind, how at once Prince Louis Napoleon became to every Christian family as one of themselves, as a close kinsman, as a brother; and tears started into the eyes of strangers as if for their own son. The hearts and voices of the people gave at once their verdict: "As the victim of the holocaust God hath accepted [him]." My brethren, need I remind you that the voice of the Christian people is the voice of God?

Again, dear brethren, his death is sudden. Yes! but is it therefore unblessed? Were it now the time, or were this the place, I could, from the records of the most faithful among the faithful Catholic families of this country, give such de-

tails of sudden deaths as would, I think, abundantly prove that oftentimes in His charity and His yearning that the sinner may not perish, but be converted and live, our Father in heaven suddenly and most unexpectedly snaps "the silver chord"* of one who is innocent and well prepared, in order that the warning may reach the hearts of survivors who are neither innocent nor well prepared for death.†

Let us then, brethren, look a little further, and see whether we do not discover indications

* Eccles. xii, 6.

† To record a few instances of faithful and devout lives brought to a close by a death sudden but not unprepared, I mention the names of Sir Edward Vavasour, Mr Constable Maxwell (grandfather of the present Lord Herries), Mr Thomas Weld (father of the Cardinal), Mr George Weld of Leagram, Mr Philip Stourton, Miss Emily Pereira, Monica Lady Gerard. Of these, the first mentioned, Sir Edward Vavasour, had but just renounced his property, and was on his way to consecrate in France the remainder of his life to God's service as a Christian Brother. At the top of a steep hill he quickened his pace to overtake the diligence which was in advance of him, and suddenly sunk to the ground and slept in the Lord. Mr Thomas Weld was at the close of his life keeping the feast of St Ignatius in the college of Stonyhurst, recently given by him to the Jesuit Fathers, and was singing a song to entertain the scholars, when the summons came to him, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh." His son, Mr George Weld, as I have heard, had just ended thirty days' devotion during the month of March in honour of St Joseph to ask the grace of a happy death, when, on the last day of the month, he suddenly slept in the Lord, without receiving any sacraments. To these instances we may add the name of St Francis Xavier, who died far away from friends and without any of the usual sacramental consolations of holy Church. Nor should we forget the memorable example of the great fire at Santiago in our days, when so many were burnt to death in church on the day when, by a solemn general communion, they brought to a close the novena of Mary Immaculate, and were probably more than usually well disposed for death. It is clear, then, I think, that to sudden deaths we may apply the words which our Lord spoke of him who was born blind; they are not always sent because "this man hath sinned or his parents, but that the works of God be made manifest" (John ix, 3).

that the early and unexpected death of this young Prince was decreed by his God, not in anger, but according to His great mercy—mercy to him who is taken away, mercy to others who survive.

Well, brethren, I have already said that his life, as it was short, so was in great measure a hidden life, of which till yesterday nothing was known abroad. But death is a tell-tale; and, in his case, the touching circumstances of his last hours on earth have, as I have already said, aroused among us a strong family feeling, and made him in a sense the kinsman of us all, the property of all; and thus the secrets of his privacy have by the natural force of circumstances oozed out a little. What then is the picture they reveal? A prayer is discovered penned by his own hand, carefully studied, and apparently much used. It was not meant for the eyes of men. It was to be known to his own soul and to His Father in heaven. Now, what is the petition of this young prince, who according to human wisdom had so many reasons urging him to beg for earthly greatness? "My God," he writes, "I give Thee my heart; but do Thou give me Thy gift of faith. My God, I ask not for joy, nor that difficulties be removed from my path. Far be it from me to have enjoyment if those dear to me must suffer. My God, teach me ever to understand which way my duties lie, and ever help me to fulfil them."

Now, brethren, in addition to this edifying and beautiful exposition of his secret thoughts and feelings, I have seen a private letter detailing a few of the recollections of those who had good opportunities of knowing him; and what they witness to is, first, how at the very dawning

of his reason, when he had reached his seventh year, he already showed earnest and active pity for the poor, and at the same time a very resolute will not to say a word that might betray a friend of his into trouble. In the next place, they attested that from his early years to the close of his life he was always most reverential and dutiful and loving both to his father and his mother. Besides this, they find much consolation in remembering his condescension, his thoughtful charity to all who served him, and that chivalrous fidelity to them all which appears in his last testament. They tell us how he would sit by the bedside of his servants in their sickness, and how he would take care that they should have time and opportunity to pay visits to their friends when they wished to do so. With emotion they call to mind how he has been seen to stop short in the midst of business in order to attend to his faithful nurse, who came to visit him, kissing her cordially and sitting by her side to talk with her. Again, they tell us how in the spirit of faith and Christian charity he would follow those who served his family into the next world, and would give plentiful alms to have the holy Sacrifice offered for their souls. And this last instance of his thoughtful charity supplies us with the key to understand those touching words in his prayer: "My God, if I forget those who are gone, I shall be in my turn forgotten. And, oh! what a dreary and dismal thought it were to harbour, that time has a right to wipe out the memory of those that were!" Lastly, they record how, to answer the strong pleadings of his mother's heart when she yearned to keep him away from the perils of the African climate and African warfare, he made known to

her that his soul dreaded and abhorred more than all else the idle frivolity of a worldly life and pined to be useful.

Now, my dear brethren, scanty as these little fragments of a life may be, meagre as is this outline, still, are we not bound to own that we have before us the portrait of one whose age must not, in the words of Wisdom, be counted by the number of his years; of one who has in early days by understanding arrived at "venerable grey hairs"; of one whose soul might well please God, and whom therefore the charity of God would hasten to take away out of the midst of iniquities, "lest wickedness should alter his understanding or deceit beguile his soul"? "For," as the inspired writer goes on to say, "the bewitching of vanity obscureth good things, and the wandering of concupiscence overturneth the innocent mind." *

You remember, brethren, how the widow's son at the gate of Naim sat on the bier and began to speak to those present. If Prince Louis lay here before us and were permitted to open his lips and speak a few words to us now—now that his dream is over; now that he has seen his God; now that he knows what time is and what eternity is—what wonderful lessons he could give us concerning himself and his early death, concerning ourselves, concerning our God!

Blessed be God, he would say, with ecstasy on his features; blessed be God! thrice blessed be God, who prepared me for eternal life by casting me down from the giddy height of honour. For is it not written that "man when he was in honour did not understand"? † Had I been in honour, my God, I might not have understood.

* Wisd. iv, 8-12. † Ps. xlviii, 13.

Yes, and blessed, thrice blessed, be my God and my Father, who did not let me live to prosper and forget Him, but took me away before "the bewitching of vanity had obscured all goodness, and the wandering of concupiscence had overturned the innocent mind."

And this being so, brethren, what would he say to us from his bier in answer to that question which has burst from so many sympathizing hearts in this country—a question which the men of England feel constrained to ask again and again: How was it, whence came it, that no swords flew from their scabbards to preserve so dear a life? How was it that he fell all alone, and was wounded all alone? With the kindness of his loving nature, now enhanced and intensified a thousand times, he would smile on us and say: Blame no one; for no one has sinned. It was my God that did it. My time was come, my prayer was heard. For you remember, my brethren, that one petition in the secret prayer which his heart used to pour out to his God was this: "My God, give me not joy; far be it from me to rejoice while those dear to me are suffering. Give me not joy, but if there be any expiation due, let the blow fall on me." Brethren, if men are to die as they live, how blessed ought to be the death of one who in the heyday of youth has learned to importune for such a privilege: "Let the blow fall on me!" What kinder word could his guardian angel and his patron saints in heaven say for him in return than the words of the Psalm: "May the Lord hear thee in the day of tribulation," * and hasten to take thee out "of the midst of iniquities" and "as a victim of a holocaust accept thee"?

* Ps. xix, 2.

Here then, brethren, is the explanation of the mystery of his death. As our Blessed Saviour, in the Garden of Gethsemani, said to His faithful servant who drew the sword, "Put up thy sword into its scabbard. Can I not ask My Father, and He will give Me twelve legions of angels to defend Me?" * so was it by that field of maize in Africa. Had our Blessed Lord seen fit to leave the brave, the right-minded, the filial, the thoughtful and loving young Prince any longer in this place of banishment, He had twelve legions of angels there ready to protect him. Nay, and moreover, most easily He could have put it into the minds of those right willing comrades in the camp to fence around his precious life. But his prayer was heard; his work on earth was done. It was better for him to die than to live, to sleep in the Lord rather than to drag on his existence in the midst of the uncertainties, the iniquities, and the changes of this inconstant world. Therefore was it, brethren, that once more on this occasion the will of our Blessed Lord was that the swords of brave and loving comrades should lie still in their scabbards while the assegai did its work, to allow his body to "return to the dust from whence it came, and his spirit to God who gave it." †

And now, brethren, there is one lesson more which his lips would teach if he might raise himself on his bier and speak to us. He would say: My mother and my friends, you weep and are anguished because you were not by me when I fell, to bathe my brow, to fan my cheek, to moisten my lips, to turn my couch for me. But all this, and more—oh! how much more!—you can do for me now. My friends, "have pity on

* Matt. xxvi, 53. † Eccles xii, 7.

me, have pity on me," remember me at the altar. Your prayers, your tears, your alms, joined to the Holy Mysteries, can purify and refresh my poor soul in its need. My friends, be sure of it, true is that familiar word that is written: "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead": * for few there are who pass from the midst of iniquities without a stain, without a wrinkle on their souls. My friends, forget me not, that you may never be forgotten; for, "remember My judgement. Yesterday for Me, to-day for you." †

May God then, my dear brethren, may God give to each of us the grace to learn this lesson bequeathed to us by this wise young Prince—"If I forget my friends departed, I shall be forgotten"—and grace, too, to remember and lay it to heart when we go home from his funeral, that we have most certainly to follow him, but are utterly uncertain when and where our summons shall come, or how much or how little time and opportunity will be allowed us for immediate preparation.

This being so, the parting word of his kind heart to each of us would be the word of his divine Master: "Watch and be ready." "Sigh not, you who loved me, to have me back in that dark world. Its business, its pleasures have faded away for ever. I have seen my God; and no one can see God and live on in that terrible exile. Call me not back to you, my loved ones, but make haste to enter into your rest. 'Watch and be ready'; and such as you would be found at death, such strive to be to-day."

R. I. P.

Kind reader, pray for his soul and the souls of all the Faithful departed.

* 2 Macc. xii, 46. † Ecclus xxxviii, 23.

Prayer composed by the Prince Imperial for his own use

"Mon Dieu, je vous donne mon cœur, mais Vous, donnez moi la foi! Sans foi il n'est point d'ardentes prières; et prier est un besoin de mon âme. Je vous prie, non pour que Vous écartiez les obstacles qui s'élèvent sur ma route, mais que Vous me permettiez de les franchir. Je Vous prie, non pour que Vous désarmiez mes ennemis, mais que Vous m'aidiez à me vaincre moi-même. Et daignez, O Dieu, exaucer mes prières.

"Conservez à mon affection les gens qui me sont chers. Accordez-leur des jours heureux. Si Vous ne voulez répandre sur cette terre qu'une certaine somme de joies, prenez, O Dieu, la part qui me revient, repartissez-la parmi les plus dignes; et que les plus dignes soient mes amis. Si Vous voulez faire aux hommes les représailles, frappez-moi.

"Le malheur est converti en joie par la douce pensée que ceux que l'on aime sont heureux.

"Le bonheur est empoisonné par cette pensée amère: Je me réjouis, et ceux que je chéris mille fois plus que moi sont en train de souffrir.

"Pour moi, O Dieu, plus de bonheur; je le fuis; enlevez-le de ma route. La joie je ne puis retrouver que dans l'oubli du passé. Si j'oublies ceux qui ne sont plus, on m'oubliera à mon tour: et quelle triste pensée que celle qui vous fait dire: 'Le temps efface tout!'

"La seule satisfaction que je recherche, c'est elle qui dure toujours; celle que donne une conscience tranquille. O mon Dieu, montrez-moi toujours où se trouve mon devoir; donnez-moi la force de l'accomplir en toute occasion. Arrivé

au terme de ma vie je tournerai sans crainte mes regards vers le passé. Le souvenir ne sera pas pour moi un long remords. Alors je serai heureux. Faites, O mon Dieu, pénétrer plus avant dans mon cœur la conviction que ceux que j'aime et qui sont morts sont les témoins de toutes mes actions. Ma vie sera digne d'être vu par eux, et mes pensées les plus intimes ne me feront pas rougir."

VI--Marcia Lady Herries

A Discourse preached at her Funeral in the Chapel of Everingham, December 4, 1883

> Therefore, when Tobias thought that his prayer was heard that he might die, he called to him Tobias his son, and said to him: Hear, my son, the words of my mouth, and lay them as a foundation in thy heart. When God shall take my soul, thou shalt bury my body, and thou shalt honour thy mother all the days of her life: and when she also shall have ended the time of her life, bury her by me. And all the days of thy life have God in thy mind, and take heed thou never consent to sin, nor transgress the commandments of the Lord our God. Give alms out of thy substance, and turn not away thy face from any poor person, for so it shall come to pass that the face of the Lord shall not be turned from thee.—TOBIAS iv.

YOU, dear children, who are gathered round the coffin of your mother, when you hear these words of holy Tobias, will feel as if listening again to the dying wishes of your own good father: "Honour your mother: when she shall have ended the time of her life, bury her by me; and then always walk in her footsteps by fidelity to our God and compassion for His poor." Three parting requests: bury her beside me; respect and honour her, and follow her teaching and example.

Thank God, dear children, you need no urging to incline you towards these last counsels of your father, so justly dear to you. I need not stay to press upon you the words of the Book of Proverbs: "My son, keep the commandments of thy father—bind them in thy heart continually, and

put them about thy neck. When thou walkest, let them go with thee; when thou sleepest, let them keep thee; and when thou awakest, talk with them."* For his words and wishes are bound up in your hearts and hung round your necks; they are present to you when you walk abroad; you lie down to rest remembering his counsels and example, and you wake in the morning, as the Holy Spirit expresses it, talking with him of the coming day, its wants and its chances.

Bury her by me—honour her—walk in her footsteps. With ready hearts you answer: *Fiat*—It shall be, father, as you wish.

1. Accordingly, here and nowhere else you bid the bearers stand and lay down her mortal remains; in this place you wish her grave to be, that here, beside the bones of her husband, your much-loved father, her body may lie awaiting the resurrection that is to come. This is well; this is what ought to be.

There was indeed good reason and special cause why the Providence of God should arrange for this His faithful handmaid—who was, as St Paul words it, *vere vidua*,† so truly a Christian widow—the great privilege of dying in the Holy City, amid the shrines of martyrs and of virgins and of the holy apostles, and under the uplifted hand of the Vicar of Christ raised to bless her. This was the fitting termination of a very supernatural life of faith; but you did well to bring her coffin from the distant south to this chapel of her northern home. Between her deathbed, indeed, and this scene of her married life, there seemed to lie spaces and barriers hardly to be passed; far-reaching plains and

* Prov. vi, 20. † 1 Tim. v, 5.

mountain ranges; the snow and rainfall of the winter by land, and the billows and the gales and sick misery on sea; weary days of fatigue, and nights of dreary sleeplessness. But it behoved you to face the trouble and the trial and the risk, for it was right and fitting that her grave should be here and not elsewhere. "When she also shall have ended her time, bury her by me."

This, I say, is right, and what ought to be; for you remember, dear children, the words of David's lament when the news came to him that King Saul was dead and Jonathan also dead. "Saul and Jonathan," he sighed out, "lovely and comely in their life, even in death they were not divided." With much more truth, and without any fear of desecrating by profane adulation this sanctuary, and the holiness of Christian death, we may say of this husband and wife, your father and your mother: "Their union was lovely and comely in life, and in death they must not be divided."

"Bury her beside me." Yes, dear children, for out of these two silent graves, thus fitted side by side, will come forth a lesson much needed in the evil days in which our lot is cast. For we are living in melancholy times, described by the Psalmist in the 11th psalm when he exclaims: "Save me, O Lord, for there is now no saint; truths are decayed among the children of men." And one of God's revealed truths that is fading and dying out in the midst of many men and women in this land of ours is the sanctity and heavenly beauty of Christian marriage. Now I can attest with truth that when in times past I have heard men say, as we do hear them say in these days of unbelief, that the yoke of Chris-

tian and indissoluble marriage—that bond which God joins, and no man has leave to sunder—is a burden too heavy for human frailty, I have found myself making answer in my mind: Go to the home at Everingham; see with your eyes, and "be not incredulous, but believing."* Cast, as our phrase is, in very different moulds, bringing with them from their family homes characters and temperaments and individualities strikingly distinct and even in contrast, yet through that grace given in our days, as in all times before, in the holy sacrament of marriage to enable husband and wife to love and be faithful and to bring up their children in the fear and love of God, the thoughts of your father and your mother, their affections, their aims and aspirations became so thoroughly and so happily blended, their union and harmony so true and so complete, that I find it even now difficult to unravel the interwoven story of their lives and to think of them apart. And this Christian and blessed home, as I remember it, has ever seemed to me to illustrate and justify that word of St Paul, that in the Church of Christ marriage is a great mystery—that is, "a great sacrament." †

Bury her, then, beside him, that their joined graves may perpetuate this lesson, so useful and so much needed, that the hand of God is not shortened in these latter days; that the "faithful God" ‡ has not forgotten any of His promises to His Church; that now, as in all past ages, graces are abundantly poured out from "the fountains of our Saviour," § through the channels of the sacraments, on the holy state of Christian marriage.

* John xx, 27. † Ephes. v, 32. ‡ 1 Cor. x, 13. § Isa. xii, 3.

Compare, if you will, dear brethren, what we remember of this Christian home with the inspired pictures of blessed married life which we meet with in the holy Writ, and say, is there any harsh contrast between the two? Is there not rather a wonderful agreement? In the Book of Proverbs, for instance, when the inspired prophet, pouring forth his ecstatic vision of the holy wife, exclaims: "The heart of her husband trusteth in her . . . . she will render him good and not evil all the days of her life":* is not this our own exact remembrance? Was it not always apparent as the daylight that with complete repose the heart of this good husband trusted in his good wife, sure and certain that his possessions, his children, his reputation, his beloved chapel, and all else dear to him, were safe in her keeping? And, on the other hand, is there any one among her most intimate companions and familiars who can remember any instance of her returning him anything but good, in work, in word, and in thought? I wonder if there be on earth one witness that ever heard a hasty word

* Prov. xxxi, 11, 12. Those intimate with the deceased Lady Herries will, I think, not fail to observe how many words in the inspired description of a good wife in Proverbs xxxi tally with their recollections of her domestic life. Whenever she spoke of her husband, and when his name was mentioned in her presence, her language, her tone of voice and her countenance always revealed how thoroughly she was contented with him and believed in his goodness. His thoughts respecting her were of the same character. "She has ever been," he said to his children as his death drew nigh, "she has ever been to me an angel guardian." When his end was near, she felt a great desire that he might not be taken from her before the anniversary of their wedding-day, and begged of our Lord to grant her this favour. Her prayer was heard. Her husband lived till a few minutes after midnight, and died when the 12th of November, their wedding-day, had already commenced. From that hour she never failed to wake at midnight, as the anniversary came round, and to rise to pray for his soul.

drop from her lips that was not loyal and reverent and kind to her husband? "She will render him good and not evil all the days of her life."* So is it also when we read the description of a good man's family life in the 127th Psalm; we find the picture reproduced in this happy home: "Blessed are all they that fear the Lord: they walk in His ways. For thou shalt eat the labour of thy hands: blessed art thou, and it shall be well with thee. Thy wife as a fruitful vine on the side of thy house, and thy children as olive-plants round about thy table. Behold, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord. May the Lord bless thee out of Sion, and mayest thou see the good things of Jerusalem all the days of thy life." Was it not so, brethren? For there are two roads by which our Lord conducts His servants to heaven. Sometimes we see Him, as Ecclesiasticus teaches us, proving acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation, even as gold is tried in the fire.* At other times, when His faithful servants are already weaned and detached from this earth and truly poor in spirit, when the beginning of their joy is to use their riches to adorn the house and the altar of the Lord, and to soothe the sorrows of the poor, we see that God takes a pleasure in pouring out on them not only an abundance of spiritual graces, but also good plenty of the dews of heaven and the fatness of the earth. It was along this path, dear children, that our Lord was pleased to lead your father and your mother. They were not of this world, but they held an honoured position in this world. Even from those who were alien in faith from them they had a welcome which other

* Ecclus ii, 5.

Catholics less staunch and staple have sometimes tried to win by the sacrifice of conscience and failed. Though subsequently, in her widowhood, her love for the poverty of Jesus Christ and His Blessed Mother became manifest and undisguised, yet during her married life she conformed to her station; and, as the inspired prophet writes: "Fine linen and purple was her covering, and her husband was honourable in the gates when he sat among the senators of the land."* Now, though our Saviour uttered this warning, "Woe to you rich!"† and explained so forcibly how hard it is for the rich to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, yet He added this word of comfort: "With God all things are possible";‡ and though strongly He denounced the world and bade us dread its alluring charms, yet at the same time He added: "Have confidence: I have overcome the world."§ Forth from Him, the true Vine, there flows into the branches, His true disciples, a heavenly virtue that is stronger than all the temptations of this world. Of this heavenly virtue the beloved disciple is speaking when he wrote these words: "This is the victory which overcometh the world: our faith."‖ While, therefore, the loving Providence of God hastens, as we read in Wisdom, to bring the soul of the innocent one that pleases Him "out of the midst of iniquities, lest wickedness should alter his understanding or deceit beguile his soul";¶ on the other hand, oftentimes our Saviour's prayer to His Father for His chosen servants is this: "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of this world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from evil. They are not of the world, as I am

* Prov. xxxi, 22. † Luke vi, 24. ‡ Matt. xix, 26.
§ John xvi, 33. ‖ 1 John, v, 4. ¶ Wisd. iv, 14, 11.

not of the world. Sanctify them in truth."* It was thus, dear children, that your father and mother spent together the long term of their married life in the world; and courted by the world and yet not tainted by the world, but "sanctified in truth," in the ancient Catholic faith of our fathers, "lovely and comely in life their union was; in death let them not be divided."

2. So far then, dear children, you have gladly carried out your father's wish. And now, are you less well inclined towards his second behest, that you shall honour your mother? Honour her! Oh, yes! assuredly, most gladly; but how? Not, indeed, with the funeral pageants of the world; not with the hollow and heartless panegyrics of pagan mourners, who, as St Paul tells us, have no hope and are ignorant concerning them that sleep.† For in the days of their sojourn on this earth, your father and your mother would have cordially joined in the words of the Psalmist: "Let not the oil of the sinner fatten my head";‡ that is to say, let not the soft language of the flatterer, with its deadly sweetness, poison our souls. "His words are smoother than oil, and the same as darts."§ How much more earnestly and feelingly, now that they have seen in the world of realities all the loveliness and the greatness of God's goodness and all the extremity of their own littleness, would they beseech us not to torture them and not to desecrate the holiness of the grave by the unhallowed incense of lying adulation! Ah! how fearfully ill-chosen and out of place, and how unspeakably cruel are those false phrases with which men so often consign their departed ones to un-

* John xvii, 15, seq. † 1 Thess. iv, 12. ‡ Ps. cxl, 5.
§ Ps. liv, 22.

Christian oblivion! "They are gone to God," they say; "it is well with them"—as much as to say: "We need not take any more trouble about them." And so they leave them unhelped and unassisted in the time of their dire necessity; utterly disregarding the solemn warning given us by the charity of God: "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins."* None know better than Christ's holy servants, when on their death-beds, that commonly the departing soul takes with it out of this life some debt unpaid to God's holiness and justice. None, therefore, say more humbly and more touchingly to the dear ones whom they leave behind them: "Have pity on me, have pity on me: you at least, my friends, have pity on me."†

Most wisely, then, dear children, and fittingly, you honoured this good mother when you made haste to avail yourselves of your opportunities in the Holy City and elsewhere to secure the multiplication of prayers and Holy Sacrifices for the repose of her soul.

But there is still another way in which "the blessed dead who die in the Lord"‡ are honoured after death by survivors. Indeed, it is ordinarily at death and after death that their full measure of honour and their triumph comes to them. It was when "He bowed His head and gave up the ghost"§ that the men on Calvary suddenly changed their tone and began to speak kindly of Jesus of Nazareth. "Indeed, this was a just Man."‖ "Indeed, this Man was the Son of God."¶ So is it oftentimes with His servants. Death is a tell-tale. Death reveals

* 2 Macc. xii, 46. † Job, xix, 21. ‡ Apoc. xiv, 13.
§ John xix, 30. ‖ Luke xxiii, 47. ¶ Mark xv, 39.

hidden secrets and much truth. It is around the deathbed and at the grave that friends begin to understand the word which the Archangel St Raphael spoke to the good old man, Tobias—it is "honourable to reveal and confess the works of God."* One sentence of that prophetic portrait of the good wife, from which I have already quoted, is this: "Her children shall rise up and call her blessed." It is when "the dust returns into its earth from whence it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it,"† that the tongues of children and intimate friends become untied; and then, as our Saviour says of the learned scribe, "out of their treasures they bring forth old things and new."‡ Out of their memories and out of their hearts they pour, one upon another, holy instances of works and words—of faith, of charity, of sacrifice, of courage, of piety and compassion and devotedness—some called back from days long gone, others the precious relics gathered up in the last hours of the earthly pilgrimage, always so closely watched, always so dear and so sacred.

To rehearse here all the edifying details of her married life and of her widowhood which have come to my knowledge would be a task out of proportion to this sacred solemnity. They would fill many chapters of a biography, interesting and exemplary, and still would only be a very small and insignificant fragment from that ample store of good works and pious words and holy thoughts which, as we know from St John's teaching, went with her as she left the world: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for their works follow them."§ Happily, however,

* Tob. xii, 7. † Eccles. xii, 7. ‡ Matt. xii, 52.
§ Apoc. xiv, 13.

you, dear brethren, who knew her intimately, do not need an accumulation of facts and instances to prove to you that she was a faithful handmaid of the Lord, a loving wife, a devoted mother, a kind and considerate mistress, a friendly neighbour, a genial companion, and, lastly, one of those true Christian widows whose mourning is so blessed. Allow me, then, rather to spend the little time now available in discussing a question which will help to do her honour, and also bring some profit to our own souls.

The question that I wish to ask is this: "Was there excess in her piety? Was there exaggeration in her religious career?" And to my own question I am inclined to make answer in this way: "Yes, thank God! there was much in her life and conversation, many works and many words which, by the wise and prudent of this world, would be condemned as excess and exaggeration and eccentricity." I say: "Thank God" for this; for I remember, brethren, and so do you, that of all the children of men, the one whom the wise of this world have most unanimously and most decidedly branded as a fool is our Saviour Jesus Christ crucified; and next to Him His holy Mother, who stood by Him to the end on Calvary and watched and shared all the foolishness of the Cross. Herod was only the spokesman of the wise world when he bade his sleek, his perfumed, his highly respectable courtiers, those servile voluptuaries who were ready partners in all his crimes, put the fool's robe on Jesus and so send Him as a spectacle through the streets. "Christ crucified," St Paul writes, "unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Gentiles foolishness."* And yet the day is com-

* 1 Cor. i, 23.

ing when every one of us would give most gladly, with a heart bounding with joy, all the gold and silver and the jewels, all the honour and distinctions of this poor world, to buy, if so might be, the privilege of standing among those who have been so blessed as to sometimes share the fool's garment of our Lord. Yes, dear children, give thanks to God that your saintly mother did many deeds and spoke many words and harboured many thoughts, many aspirations, many holy plans which this world would laugh to scorn.

Tell it, for instance, to the wise and the great how, in the days of her widowhood—when her grey hairs and her languid footsteps already made plain what time and self-imposed toil had done to her bodily strength—you used to see her in the early morning put a little bread into her pocket, as for a journey, and then go out on foot to the distant chapel; or, again, how you have seen her in the days of her declining health trying with her feeble hands to guide the reins along the wintry and difficult roads in the North, that she might reach a church still more distant; and all this simply that she might kneel before the altar on which the sacred Passion and Death of our Lord was reproduced in the Holy Mass. If for pleasure or for some earthly gain she had run risks and borne hardships, it were well; but if she breaks her rest and wastes time and strength and health, and encounters risk, only to honour Jesus crucified, what can the wise and prudent of this earth say, save what their types and masters said before them: *Ut quid perditio hæc?*—"Wherefore this waste?" *

Or again, make known to the prudent of this

* Matt. xxvi, 8.

world that, within a few days of her death, she prevailed upon her physician to permit her to rise from her sick-bed—I ought to say her death-bed—and brave the cold air of a November morning, in order that she might have the great consolation of assisting at the Holy Mass offered up for her husband's soul on the anniversary of his death, and again on the feast of one of her many favourite patrons, St Stanislaus Kostka ;* or disclose, if you will, her secrets, and tell this world how she loved to rise in the middle of the night to go to the chapel because our Lord was there, and because she wished to beg grace and mercy for some soul dear to Him ; tell them also that, even when in the chapel, she was often-times not content till she could place herself near the altar in order to be closer to our Lord. All these revelations, and so many others like them, with which her life abounded, what must they seem to the eyes of our prudent world if not eccentric foolishness? And so, in truth, it was

* Her patron saints were many. The number of saints whom she specially honoured and the number of holy mysteries to which she bore a special devotion surprised all who knew her well, and would, no doubt, be considered by some as evidence of exaggeration. Yet that great master in spiritual life, the Venerable Father Lancicius, again and again inculcates the lesson that fervent souls can marvellously multiply their store of merit by crowding into the day a variety of acts of different virtues, which to some more lukewarm would appear an intolerable burden. Holy Church speaks of the virgin St Cecilia as the "argumentosa apis"—the busy bee gathering honey from every flower. After the death of Lady Herries, a sealed compact was found among her papers, in which she covenanted with St Joachim and St Anne to take care of her new convent. Each of her nine daughters she committed to the care of one of the Choirs of Angels. For her own Angel Guardian and St Francis of Assisi and St Benedict Labré and for the Holy Souls she always found time, and still was ever ready to adopt the pious practices which she met with in her travels.

the foolishness, the indiscretion, the bad taste of penitent Magdalene, who rudely violated all the laws of the well-born and the wise when she intruded into the supper-room to wash the feet of Jesus with her tears, and wipe them with her flowing hair, and to pour out on his Sacred Head the very best of her precious perfumes.* Alas! who are the foolish ones? Who are out of order? Who are the eccentric? They who thus love much, or we who love our Lord too little? When the dream of this present life shall come to an end, and we awake to realities in the eternal world, how much time shall we wish ourselves to spend in purgatory, there to prolong our acts of contrition for neglect of our blessed Lord in the tabernacle and on the holy altar? Death sets many things to rights, corrects many a false estimate of men and things. "The first shall be last and the last first."† Remembering then the earnestness and the courage of the fervent, we shall say, "These are they whom we had some time in derision and for a parable of reproach. We fools esteemed their life as madness. Behold how they are numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints."‡

Yes, and in many other ways this enviable kind of excess and exaggeration was discernible in your dear mother, so that, perforce, the prudent of this world were obliged to pronounce against her, since "[her] life was not like other men's, and [her] ways were very different."§ When, for example, men of modern thought chance to hear of her creed concerning the idols

* Out of reverence for our Lord on the altar, Marcia Lady Herries has been seen with the broom and pail cleaning out the large and handsome chapel at Everingham, when her servants were otherwise occupied and could not do it.

† Matt. xix, 30. ‡ Wisd. v, 3-5. § Wisd. ii, 15.

of this world, gold and silver—how, as she parted with ornaments and trinkets for her poor, she used to say with evident pleasure: "A little while and I shall be one of God's poor"; and how, in the days of her widowhood, when a friend in high station invited her to one of those princely mansions open only to the select few, she made answer: "I have only this one dress that is now upon me; perhaps your husband would not like to entertain one so badly clothed"; and how again, in countless other ways, she proved her firm belief in the word of our Lord, "Blessed are the poor" *—what can they do but rise tumultuously, as the Ephesians did for their goddess,† and cry anathema against all who hold such tenets and blaspheme against the gods of this world, gold and silver?

Again, dear children, the courtly and discreet of this earth may often have been shocked and scandalized at what they would call the ill-timed boldness and intrusiveness with which this Christian lady would dare at times, actually in presence of the well-mannered world, to speak of God, of Christ, of Holy Church and of eternity—quite out of season, they would say, and out of place, and in the very worst of taste. Alas! had she waited for the fitting moment, when this world would have heard with pleasure, or with patience, discourses concerning God and our Lord Jesus Christ and the eternal truths, when would that fitting time have come? Which among all the days of the year is the privileged day? which among the hours of the morning, the noon, the evening, the midnight, is the happy one, when they who love the world are willing to hear of God, of Christ Jesus, of eternity? When

* Luke vi, 20. † Acts xix.

the news came that our Lord had arrived on this earth, "Herod was troubled and all Jerusalem with him."* So is it still. No one so truly unwelcome to this world as Christ our Lord. St Paul was indiscreet enough and wanting quite in worldly wisdom and good manners when he began to treat before the Roman Governor of justice and chastity and the judgement to come; and Felix, being terrified and rendered quite uncomfortable by this unseasonable intrusion, answered: "For this time go thy way; but when I have a convenient time I will send for thee."† Did the convenient time ever arrive? Did he ever send for Paul again to hear him speak of justice, of chastity and the judgement to come?

So, I say, is it still. God created this world; it is His own world. It is He who maintains it in existence; but this world tells Him, as the men of Bethlehem did, that for Him there is no place here. "Wo to this world!" our Saviour said in sadness,‡ and His beloved disciple added: "I write unto you, children; I write unto you, fathers; I write unto you, babes; I write unto you, young men: do not love the world."§ What wonder, since the world is so irreconcilably hostile to its Creator, its Lord, its God! It is by His ordination and careful direction that this universe holds together, and that its days roll on and silent nights follow in due course. It is His watching Providence that prepares the sunlight and the stars, the changing wind, the showers and the dew-fall, the heat and the cold, and all necessary seasons, the winter and the spring-time, the summer and the autumn. All these things are His daily concern; and all so

* Matt. ii, 3. † Acts xxiv, 25. ‡ Matt. xviii, 7.
§ 1 John ii, 13-15

good, so wisely ordered. And yet is He proscribed in His own creation. If He comes into His own world, His own world will not know Him; and, therefore, they who in this world, and in presence of this world, are so eccentric as to wish to speak of God—what can they expect but to be frowned down, or begged with oily words to postpone their discourse till the coming of that "convenient moment"? Still, from time to time, a Christian man, a Christian woman, is seen moving about, unscared by this world's frowns, and able to say: "I spoke of Thy testimonies, O Lord, even in the presence of the kings of this earth, and I was not abashed." *

Once more, dear children, there is another point on which the wise and the great—and especially perhaps the wise and the great of this nineteenth century—cannot help being antagonistic to your mother. For their great maxim and their motto is, as we read in Wisdom: "Come, let us enjoy the good things that are at present, and let us speedily use the creatures as in youth. Let us fill ourselves with costly wine and ointments. Let us crown ourselves with roses before they be withered. Let none of us go without his part in luxury." † This is their code; and they are bigots with regard to it, and cannot brook a contrary creed, and, therefore, do we find them adding this word: "Let us lie in wait for the just, for he is not for our turn, he is contrary to our doings; he is become a censurer of our thoughts, he is grievous to us even to behold." Yes, your mother was necessarily an unwelcome reproach to a luxurious world, because our crucified Lord, with whom she communed so

* Ps. cxviii, 46. † Wisd. ii, 6, seq.

much and so intimately, had taught her to resist with a wonderful courage the tyranny of the body. In an eminent degree He had bestowed on her that precious gift which is ever a special token of His predilection—a strong love for heavenly chastity, and a horror of all that could diminish its brightness. Therefore was she so stern against her appetites. I think that those who watched her narrowly during life—her fasts and her continual acts of self-denial—will bear me out when I say that she was as ingenious and quick-sighted to discover chances of mortifying her body as ordinary men and women are to find means of increasing comfort and to indulge their tastes and appetites.* What then could the prudence of the flesh say of her, but that "she is not for our turn; she is become a censurer of our thoughts, and grievous for us even to behold?"

Yet now I venture to add that, if we prove her life and conversation by those tests commended to us by the Holy Ghost, we shall come to the decision that her piety was no counterfeit, but true and genuine; that she had paid the price and bought from heaven the fire-tried gold which blessed St John counsels us all to buy; † that her lamp was duly trimmed and furnished with the good oil of Divine grace, and burning brightly and not at all extinct. For the apostle St James gives us this brief and simple method for distinguishing true virtue from spurious imitations: "Religion," he says, "pure and un-

* In her declining years she tried to induce the religious of a convent, where she loved to spend some days in retirement, to give her a penitential haircloth that would cover her body; and one of her favourite exercises was to complete in a given time a certain number of acts of self-denial in honour of the thorns in our Lord's crown.

† Apoc. iii, 18.

defiled before God and the Father, is to visit the fatherless and the widow in their tribulation, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." *

Well, dear children, with regard to this second point of keeping oneself unspotted from the world, I think I have said enough to show how far removed your mother was from that love of the world which defiles. St John, who from our Saviour's bosom and from His Divine Heart drew his abhorrence of this wicked world, tells us in his First Epistle that all that is in the world, all that makes up the spirit of the world, all that sets its energies in motion, is "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life"; † that is to say, the love of bodily indulgence, the love of those costly varieties which gold can buy to please the eye, and the love of high position and ambitious ascendancy. Now, through the grace that came to her from union with Christ Jesus, these three idols of this world she held in abhorrence.

And yet, such was her fear of being stained by this world, and so becoming displeasing to our Lord, that she had a greediness—if I may so speak—a hunger and thirst for sacramental absolution. With unbounded faith she welcomed the promise of our Lord: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven." ‡ She loved to descant on the glorious efficacy of the Sacrament of Penance; and with how much reality she spoke we may gather from this one fact, that during the last week of her life, though no symptoms had as yet appeared to warn either her or the friends near her that death was coming, yet she three several times begged of her confessor

* Jas. i, 27. † 1 John ii, 16. ‡ John xx, 23.

to repeat for her once more the blessing of absolution from her sins. And on the last occasion, with that childlike simplicity which so often gave a charm to her conversation, she said to him, as he lifted his hand to pronounce the sacred words: "Wait, Father, one little while, that I may make a very good act of contrition." That it was a very good act of contrition no one will doubt who has observed how truly she was during so many years a Christian mourner, and had learned to sorrow sincerely for sins committed either by herself or others against the infinite goodness of God.

Another indication that the innocence of her soul was not defiled by a love of the world was found in the remarkable candour and transparency of her character. Our Saviour tells us that "every one that doth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light." * Gauged according to this axiom, the evil that she did was little; for she seemed to have no fear at all of the light. Her friends knew all her faults from her own lips; and, as she revealed them, were more and more impressed by the evidences of a blameless and guileless life. Hence, when we hear from the bystanders how, after a time of apparent unconsciousness, she, at the last moment, opened her eyes and turned them intently towards heaven, we do not indeed pretend to penetrate with any certainty the secrets of death—for none come back to tell us what happens at death or after death—but with the knowledge that we have of her antecedent life it is no wonder to us that this parting and animated gaze upwards towards heaven suggested the thought: "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God." †

* John iii, 20. † Matt. v, 8.

And now there only remains St James's other great test of genuine virtue—compassion for the widow and the fatherless in their tribulation. Had she this mark of salvation upon her? That you may better answer this question, my dear brethren, recall to your memory that there are different degrees of charity to Christ's poor. For, in the first place, if we can induce one whose sins are many and heinous to give alms, even out of his superfluities, we begin at once to be hopeful; and with reason, as our Lord's language on this point to those hardened reprobates, the Scribes and Pharisees, is so clear and so decisive: "For the rest give alms, and lo! all things are clean unto you." *

But now, in the next place, if we meet with one who, like the poor widow of the Gospel, gives alms even out of her necessities—oh! such a one we envy and call blessed; for we remember how our Lord gathered together His disciples that they might all gaze with admiration on almsgiving of this kind. †

And still almsgiving can go further than this; for it is with almsgiving as with the meat we eat, of which we are told by our old and homely proverb, "The nearer the bone the sweeter the meat." Even so the more our alms come out of our own flesh and bone, the more welcome they are to God. Consequently, if you give gold or silver, or even one penny out of your necessities, you do well, and very well, and delight our Lord; but if you go further, and give not only your gold and silver, but the labour of your body, the tears of your eyes, the sighs of your heart, then more and more precious are your alms growing in the estimation of your God. And now, does there

* Luke xi, 41. † Mark xii, 43.

still lie anything beyond this in the career of mercy? Can our almsgiving reach even further? Yes, dear brethren; because over and above the toil of our body, the tears of our eyes, the sighs of the heart, we can give thought and study that will increase the value of our alms a hundredfold. There is an art, a skill, a science in almsgiving, as well as in husbandry or medicine. Out of a great variety of works of mercy we can, by thought and study, by prayer and by seeking good counsel, find the one that will give most glory to God and best relief to the widow and the fatherless. We can select some form of charity that will spread itself more widely. We can discover a work of mercy of a higher order that shall benefit not only the suffering body but the immortal soul. So, too, we can by careful thought and planning provide that our almsgiving and works of compassion shall not come to an end with our own short life on earth, but endure to spread blessings around when our flesh is consumed under the earth.

Now, dear children, your good mother was taught by our Lord to practise almsgiving well and wisely. For, first of all, she gave alms not only out of her superfluities, but out of her necessities. She robbed herself and stinted herself for the sake of her poor to an extent that made her friends remonstrate, and oftentimes with much severity. Secondly, she gave not only her gold and silver, her ornaments and jewels and her dresses—treasures to which even Christian ladies oftentimes become so strongly attached,—but she gave unsparingly the sweat of her brow and the toil of her weak body. For do not the poor around her home love now to tell how often she visited their homes, and sat upon their sick-beds, not

scared by loathsome cancer-wounds nor the tainted atmosphere of the small, close room; and how she would come at times to mind their homes and take charge of their infant while they went to chapel to receive holy Absolution or the divine sacrament of our Lord's Body and Blood; and how at their return they would find their room swept and tidied, and the kettle on the fire and their breakfast ready? And are not her servants recording now with pleasure and emotion* how, when she could not herself carry all the loaves she wished to distribute, she would ask them as a favour to give her help? And so, too, it is well remembered how at one period of her life, when so permitted to do, she made it her rule to go to every cottage to which the Blessed Sacrament was carried, to help the preparations for the coming of our Lord. And we may add of her that "to the end (she) loved."† She loved her poor to the end. For one of her latest acts in this country was to gather together, with much labour to herself, above a hundred poor persons on the last feast of our Lady's Nativity, in order that the first Mass in the new church which she had built might be celebrated in their presence, and that afterwards they might be gladdened with a dole which it pleased her to give more than them to receive it. Yes, to the end she loved them; and from her death-bed her last use of money was to send once more an alms to be distributed among her large family of poor pensioners.

But she offered to our Lord still better alms than these. For not only by day, but during the

* By her servants she was beloved as a kind and considerate mistress, and yet "looked well to the paths of her house" (Prov. xxxi, 27), and ruled "with carefulness" (Rom. xii, 8).

† John xiii, 1.

silent hours of the night, when others are forgetting all their cares in sleep, or drowning thought in gaiety and dissipation, she was on her knees in presence of the blessed Sacrament, offering her tears, her yearnings and her many sighs, for the conversion of some soul dear to her.

And higher still she ascended in the heavenly science of almsgiving. For she was fully alive to the fact that alms would be wasted if given too impetuously; and that, as with fasting so with alms, they can give but little pleasure to God if our own will is too much mixed up with them. And, therefore, most humbly and earnestly she prayed for light to know what work of mercy would be pleasing to our Lord and profitable to the poor. Like the good wife described, as I have already said, in the Proverbs, she studied and "considered the field" * before she bought it out of her earnings—that is to say, out of the fruits of her rigid economy and self-sacrifice. And so, after long thought and much prayer, and with the good advice of those who rule in God's house, and can speak in God's name, she made her choice, and resolved to leave behind her on the earth two convents—two families of consecrated virgins, whose perpetual prayer and penitential lives should continue to win grace and mercy for the fatherless and the widow when she could no longer work for them herself here on earth. And this her sacred purpose she effected—out of her necessities—by submitting to discomforts and privations, of which only the recording angels of our Lord can give account. She saw before her death her second convent completed. "She put out her hand to strong things; she girded her loins with strength,

* Prov. xxxi, 16.

and strengthened her arm,"* and her work was consummated. In this work her health had gradually failed, her body was in a state of exhaustion. She required perfect nursing and repose, and there were many around her who very earnestly besought her to allow her body the rest and care that it so evidently required. But she did not think it right to rest as yet. She had work still to do before she could say her *Consummatum est.* She must travel to the Continent to make it sure that the consecrated virgins would come and would not fail her, to adore the Blessed Sacrament in the midst of the spiritual desolation of Scotland. Again, before she rested she would make her last pilgrimage to the sanctuary of the Sacred Heart in the holy convent of the Visitation, and there offer the remainder of her own life to the heavenly Bridegroom. For this was her ambition, to end her days as a consecrated spouse of Jesus Christ; not in her own new convent, lest there she might be treated with undue favour, but in the silence and amid the innocence and the childlike simplicity of the daughters of St Francis of Sales, the sisters of Blessed Margaret Mary.† Lastly, her heart was also turned towards Rome. She must once more kneel at the feet of the Vicar of Christ to beg his blessing for her poor in Scotland and for her consecrated virgins, and to beg his blessing too on the evening of her own life, and on her youngest child, the only one of her large family who had not yet knelt at the feet of the Vicar of Christ. On this errand of piety

* Prov. xxxi, 19, 17.

† When revealing to her friends her longing to end her days as a consecrated nun, she would say humbly that possibly the nuns might be able to turn to some account her musical education, and that so she would not be wholly useless.

and charity she travelled to Rome, and died there. The last alms, therefore, that she gave to her poor was her health and her life. And her last offering to our Lord in the tabernacle was in like manner her health and her life. For though fully alive to the effect of cold upon her, she braved the winter morning rather than lose the grace that flows from the holy altar during Mass; and from the altar she returned stricken by the chill, to lie down contented, and give her life to Him who gave His life for her. For a little moment, when it became evident that the hand of death had touched her, those that watched as she lay unconscious were depressed and anxious, and much afraid that perchance our Lord would somewhat forget her in the hour of need, as there seemed no hope of her being able to receive the holy Viaticum. But, to their great consolation and delight, when the last anointing was administered, our Saviour was true to His promise: *Alleviabit eum Dominus*.* He raised up His handmaid, and gave her strength to sign herself with the sign of faith, and give proof of her consciousness and her fitness to receive the Body of our Lord, that He might be her food and her companion on her last great journey.

This was all, dear children, as it ought to be; and all these things, and many more, are now whispered about to do her honour and to give honour to our Blessed Lord.

You will then bury her beside your father's grave, and you will honour her as his heart would wish. And now a closing word on his last behest, that you walk in her footsteps, true to your God and full of compassion for His poor.

* Jas. v, 15.

III. You no doubt remember that favourite motto of those bygone days, which we call the days of chivalry: *Noblesse oblige*. It was in those times impressed upon the well-born child that the nobility of the family laid a duty upon him, and that he was bound to walk according to the traditions of his noble race. There is a higher and a better, and a truer Christian meaning in the phrase; and we find this higher and better meaning in words used by the good old man, Tobias, of whom I have been so often speaking. For when his own dear ones turned against him and upbraided him—as if all his almsgiving had been a folly and utterly unavailing—saying to him bitterly, "Where is thy hope, for which thou gavest alms and buriedst the dead?"—his meek rebuke to them was this: "Speak not so, for we are the children of saints, and look for the life which God will give to those who never change their faith from Him." *

"We are the children of saints": *Noblesse oblige*. We are the children of saints, we have seen with our own eyes the Gospel of our Lord put in practice in our own home. To apply St John's words to Christian sanctity: "We have seen [it] with our eyes, we have looked upon [it] and we have handled [it.]" † We are witnesses that virtue is not impossible; and witnesses also to the charm, to the happiness of a holy life; witnesses that the promises of God are fulfilled: "Seek first the kingdom of God, and all else shall be added to you." ‡

"It is good for a man," Jeremias the sorrowful prophet said in the midst of his lamentations; "It is good for a man when he hath borne the yoke from his youth." § How comparatively easy

* Tob. ii, 18. † John i, 6. ‡ Matt. vi, 33. § Lam. iii, 27.

is salvation to those who from childhood have been helped forward in piety by the counsels, by the example, by the prayers of holy parents! And you, dear children, on the other hand, must often rouse yourselves to Christian holiness by that warning word of our Lord: "If in Tyre and Sidon had been wrought the mighty works that have been wrought in you, long ago they would have done penance."*

Noblesse oblige—"We are the children of saints." To your dying hour you must never forget that word of your aged father to his wife as his end drew near: "Marcia, what joy it will be on that day when we present our sixteen children to God in heaven!" And as those Forty Martyrs, while the winter night wore on, redoubled their prayer: "O God! may not one of us lose his crown!" so must your prayer ever be: "May not one of us drop out of his place and lose the crown."

"Look unto Abraham your father," God said to His people of old, "and unto Sarah that bore you."† Let the image of your father's and your mother's holiness ever live fresh in your remembrance; and if at times the prudence of this world whispers: "Beware of excess; avoid exaggeration," oh, then remember—for it is a truth that Christian ladies and gentlemen here in this religious atmosphere of England have much need to bear in mind—remember, I say, that this world is a battlefield, and that between Christ our Lord and Lucifer there is here waged a war to extermination. Now Satan's plan of waging war is ordinarily by craft and stratagem. Sometimes, indeed, he is enabled to rage with the fire and sword of persecution against the Lord and

* Matt. xi, 21. † Isa. li, 2.

against His Church; but far more commonly his warfare is entirely by deceit and guile and artifice.

When, therefore, he sees no hope of inducing a Christian man or woman to become with him an avowed and determined Antichrist, then his policy ever is incessantly by lying to lure them to false neutrality. For this purpose and with this view he calls neutrality prudence and moderation, and ardent loyalty vulgar bigotry, excess and eccentric exaggeration, till at length he brings many, far too many, to persuade themselves—and to make a boast of it—that by their prudent moderation they have at last found out the secret of standing well with both parties: that is to say, the art of serving two masters. Alas! how little aware these self-satisfied Christians are that the Lord God is crying loudly to them: "How long do you halt between two sides? If the Lord be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him."* "I would you were hot or cold."†

Yes! before you underrate the single-minded earnestness and fervour and straightforward loyalty and courage of your mother, weigh well the language of Isaias the prophet, repeated to us in the latter days by St Paul: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the prudence of the prudent I will reject. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?" ‡ "I would that you were hot or cold; but because thou art lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth."

May our Lord in His great mercy give to you, dear children, and to all of us gathered

* 3 Kings xviii, 21. † Apoc. iii, 16. ‡ 1 Cor. i, 19.

round this bier, some share of the courage of this "valiant woman"*—courage to confess and not to deny our Crucified Lord and His Gospel; courage in seeking and saving those who are lost; courage in self-sacrifice; courage in holy prayer; courage in our compassion for the poor and the needy.

And now you will lay her in the grave, shedding no bitter, no unholy tears, but nursing in your minds peaceful thoughts; pondering in your hearts, with thankfulness, inspired pictures of the good wife and the good mother in which you recognize her. Such are the words of Ecclesiasticus, with which I may end: "The grace of a diligent woman shall delight her husband and shall fatten his bones. Her discipline is the gift of God. Such is a wise and silent woman." Perchance, however, you will say that she was joyous and expansive rather than silent. It is true that with congenial friends she could speak fluently and joyously, and out of the abundance of her heart, of God, and of the poor, and of all things innocent;† but when the topic was the scandals of this world, "the bewitching of trifling,"‡ the pride of life, the faults and shortcomings of the defenceless absent, she was a silent woman; her heart was not with the world nor with its vices, and her tongue was therefore silent. I may go on applying the text to her: "Such is a wise and silent woman. There is nothing so much worth as a well-instructed soul.

* Prov. xxxi.

† An intimate friend, much with her in her last pilgrimage and at the closing scenes of her life, writes that on the journey, when not engaged in prayer, she conversed with marvellous joyousness and kindness, saying some word of commendation with a mother's partiality for each of her children in turn.

‡ Wisd. iv, 12.

A holy and modest woman is grace upon grace; and no price is worthy of a continent soul. As the sun when it riseth in the world in the high places of God, so is the beauty of a good wife for the ornament of her house."* May she rest in peace. Eternal rest be to husband and to wife, to the father and the mother, and let perpetual light shine upon them.† Amen.

R. I. P.

Kind reader, pray for their souls and the souls of all the Faithful departed.

* Ecclus xxvi, 16, seq.

† Their graves lie beside the beautiful chapel built by her husband. He shared her love for the altar and for Holy Mass. "William," she once said to him in presence of some of her children, "would you, if you could help it, miss daily Mass?" "I do not think," he answered, "that I was ever willingly absent from daily Mass."

VII--Mother Magdalen, O.S.F.

A Discourse preached to the Nuns of St Francis in the Convent Chapel, Portobello Road, January 9, 1884.

We would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that sleep, that you be not sorrowful.—1 THESS. iv, 12.

THE words which come to my lips, dear sisters, the words which have been most often in my mind since you invited me to speak to you to-day, are the words so familiar to us from childhood: "Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen." That is to say, my thoughts are turned rather to our own wants—the wants of those who are here gathered round this coffin—than to the condition of her whose body is now to "return to the earth whence it was, whose spirit is gone back to God who gave it."*

This may seem strange to you, and indeed surprises me, for I know that the voice of God has taught us that it is a holy and wholesome thought to think much of the departed soul, and to pray much for the dead—yes, even for the holy dead, that they may be loosed from sin and from the effects and consequences of sin. I am very greatly alive to this solemn truth, that though you do so well to nurse with tender charity the sister on her sick-bed, yet it is when sickness in this world is ended, when the last breath is drawn, when the eye becomes fixed, when the

* Eccles xii, 7.

heart ceases to beat, that all your compassion and tender care are really wanted. It is not on the deathbed that the sufferer's need is greatest, not then is the cooling draught most sorely wanted, not then is sympathy and a little refreshment and the soothing anodyne most eagerly longed for. It is after death and after the judgement that our real necessities commonly begin. I say commonly, for I believe that the number of those is very small who pass out of this world so pure, so clean of heart, so entirely set free from sin and all the effects of sin, that they can at once enter into their eternal rest with God. Few, I believe, traffic here so diligently and so wisely as to leave no debt unpaid to God's justice when summoned from this world. "Man," says the Psalmist, "when placed in honour hath not understood"; * that is to say, during this present life, when we have so much power, so great privilege, such opportunities of winning more grace and more mercy, we are thoughtless, we are giddy, we are unwise and very foolish. We let the hours and days of grace run by unheeded; and, therefore, God, who is our Father, and as a Father has compassion on His frail and foolish children, has prepared after death a time and place for us in which we shall sin no more, but shall be able to make reparation for the sins, offences, and negligences of our life on earth. For His own children, for His elect, for His holy souls, He has prepared in His mercy, even according to His great mercy, a place of purgation. For "gold and silver," says Ecclesiasticus, "are tried in the fire," † but acceptable men must be chastened and purified in the furnace of humiliation. The moment then

* Ps. xlviii, 13. † Ecclus ii, 5.

that the holy dead have waked up from the drowsy slumbers of this dark world, once they have seen at the judgement-seat, even for an instant, the beauty of Jesus Christ, their most intense and earnest longing is to haste away into the furnace of humiliation, that there they may indulge without stint and measure their great contrition, and pay the last farthing of the reparation which they owe to their good God. They could never consent to go into their home in heaven till the whole of that debt is paid "with good measure, pressed down, and shaken together and flowing over";* till an ample compensation is made for every deed, every word, every thought that gave displeasure to God—to God their Father, to God their Redeemer, to God their Sanctifier. "Half of my goods I give to the poor," Zaccheus humbly and gratefully said when he came to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, "and if I have wronged any one I give back four-fold."† Not four-fold, but a hundred-fold the holy souls departed wish to give back to their God, for every wrong they did to Him by commission or omission; and, therefore, with most complete contentment and repose of heart they go into their house of mourning, into the furnace of humiliation. Yes, I say, with entire contentment and the most perfect resignation, albeit eye hath not seen the sadness, ear hath not heard the pathetic lamentation, no heart on earth hath ever conceived the anguish of that purgation which God in His charity hath prepared for those who have loved him indeed, but not well enough. They are in perfection the blessed mourners who are to be comforted, but are not yet in comfort. They are the blessed ones who hunger and thirst

* Luke vi, 38. † Luke xix, 8.

for God, and they shall be filled, but not yet. Their hour is not come; and meanwhile the hunger and thirst for God which afflicts these holy souls, the intense longing and yearning with which they endure the weary minutes and hours of those long days and weeks and months of their purgation, is beyond all that hunger and thirst can reach to in this world of ours. And yet, great as their desire is to be with their God, it comes not near to His desire to have with Him His holy children, the brides of His Son Jesus Christ. Therefore is He infinitely grateful to us if, remembering His faithful dead, we cry out from our hearts: "O God, incline unto their aid; O Lord, make haste to help them." *

This is all true, dear sisters; but there is more to be added. For the holy souls in purgatory are not only the blessed mourners who hunger and thirst for God, but pre-eminently too they are the merciful who shall find mercy. From the Creed we know that there is a Communion of Saints. Now the holy souls in purgatory are God's saints, and already must be beginning that work of charity which goes on in heaven. For in heaven, as we know, dear sisters, from St Paul's teaching, Christ our Lord is ever making intercession for us; therefore His saints in heaven and in purgatory must be doing what He is doing. For to Him and to His charity they are now conformed and made like. They, therefore, also live to plead for us. If Dives then, in his place of torment, thought so much of those he left behind in his father's house, we may be quite sure that with a charity more burning than the fires that purify them, these

* Ps. lxix, 2.

holy souls departed, now secure of their own salvation, are full of compassion for us who still are in the battlefield, still in great danger. If then I turn from your sister who is gone, and let my thoughts dwell on the necessities of ourselves, who have not yet finished our course, not yet fought our last battle, not yet secured our crown, I am only doing what Mother Magdalen herself is doing. It was about this time of the forenoon that Jesus Christ, on that day when His wounds were more numerous and far more ghastly than the wounds that lie hid in this coffin,* turned to the daughters of Jerusalem and said, from His compassionate Heart: "Weep not for Me; weep for yourselves and for your children."† And so I think would Mother Magdalen, if so permitted, from her coffin say, as a parting word to us: "Weep not for me; weep for yourselves." That you will duly remember her wants and not forget her in her necessities, I am sure; therefore I scruple not to draw your attention to the counsel which she is herself giving to us: "Think of yourselves, weep for yourselves and for your children." This is the reason why I said that the word that comes uppermost in my mind is: "Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death." *Now* and *at the hour of our death*—for these are the two all-important moments; now—and at the hour of my death. Now, for it is this present hour which is critical and decisive. The past is gone; and whatever my past has been I can in this moment—now—undo it all. However holy the past has been. I, with the terrible power of my free-will, can now

* For eight years she had borne with great patience the pain of many wounds upon her body.

† Luke xxiii, 28.

cancel and blot out all that past holiness of bygone years. And so, too, the reverse; for however much stained with crime my conscience may have been till now, it matters not; for now with the grace which is ready for me I can alter and repair and reverse the past, and by contrition and humble penitence change my sins committed into stepping-stones to heaven. The past, then, is not of so much moment as the present is; "Pray for me, therefore, now." So in like manner as to the future, the time to come is not mine as yet; I have no guarantee that it ever will be mine; I cannot deal with it. *Now*, therefore, pray for me; this is my hour; Mother of God, pray for us now and at the hour of our death. *Now*, here, as we stand around this bier, pray, Mother of God, that a grace may come to us, that out of her coffin the departed Sister Mary Magdalen may whisper into our ear some Christmas tidings that we shall remember and not forget.

Christmas tidings, I say, dear sisters; for, as you know, we are still keeping our Christmas. It was on the old Christmas day, as we call it, on the festival of Epiphany, that I looked for the last time on the features of Mother Magdalen, as she lay in her coffin. Christmas and the coffin! Christmas chimes and the passing bell! Christmas carols and the Adeste and the Dirge! How, dear sisters, can these things go well together? "By Thy ordinance, O Lord," the Psalmist answers, "the day goeth on; for all things serve Thee"; * for it is by Thy ordination that in these northern climes Christmas comes to us with the winds and snows and rain of winter. Therefore it is that so many Christian men and women and

* Ps. cxviii.

children have to spend their Christmas time by the bedside of the dying and at the grave of the dead. And is this bad management on the part of Providence? is this arrangement a mistake? No, dear sisters, far from it, when death comes to one who is well prepared to die. Now though I have already said that there are few who die unblemished and with the last farthing paid, yet, at the same time, when one like Mother Magdalen is called from hence—one who always with sincere humility acknowledged every smallest fault, and received with gratitude correction for every error or shortcoming; one who from choice persevered in the penitential life of a Daughter of St Francis; one who by sufferings, long and many, patiently borne, has drunk largely of the chalice of our Lord—the moment of death is in reality the true midnight hour at Bethlehem when Christ is born. When on the vigil of the Epiphany your sister asked, "What day is this?" and then turned on her side and fell asleep, we called that death. But for those who fall asleep in the Lord this is in truth the beginning of life; this is the true Christmas; this the first real festival of Epiphany. If she ends her pilgrimage in God's grace and friendship, and goes, as she did, with the Body of her Lord as her Viaticum, and as St Chrysostom pictures the scene, with the angels surrounding her departing soul to do honour to their Eucharistic King present with her, then I say this is for her the great Epiphany. After her long and dreary travel she has arrived at last at her Bethlehem, and finds at the judgement-seat Jesus and His Mother, both compassionate, both propitious; and in the overwhelming light of this Epiphany, this glorious revelation, all the little details of her past

pilgrimage are at once forgotten and effaced, put out of sight for ever. Hours of pain and hours of pleasure here on earth, days of sunshine and days of gloom, the sympathy and kindness of friends, the slights and frowns of the unkind, seasons of plenty, seasons of want and poverty, of what moment now are these vicissitudes? The one overwhelming thought, as she arrives at her journey's end and finds herself so suddenly in presence of Jesus and His Mother, is the thought of the Magi: "I have seen Thy star, O Lord, and I have come"—*Vidimus et venimus.** The moments in our present life that will stand out for ever, never to be forgotten through all eternity, are those moments when God sends His star, His messenger, to call us. If we can say: "*Vidimus et venimus*—We saw and we came," oh, then for ever, for ever and for ever, it is well with us! And, on the contrary, one of the dismal never-ending wails that will resound in the prison of the lost will be: "*Vidimus et non venimus*—We saw, but did not come." In the early days of her womanhood, Mother Magdalen, whose body now lies here, saw in her far country, beyond that terrible chaos of separation which the sins of our forefathers established in this land three centuries ago, the star of the Lord inviting her to truth, to unity, to obedience to God and His Holy Church. She saw, and she came. Later on again the star of the Lord once more appeared to her, and she heard the Bridegroom's voice inviting her, and saying: "Forget thy people and thy father's house, and the Lord will be enamoured of thy beauty." † She saw, and she came.

Now, when these things happen, when God's

* Matt. ii, 2. † Ps. xliv, 11, 12.

star appears to man, when the voice of God calls upon man, then, by virtue of that awful power given to him, man, the image of God, the child of God, the vicegerent of God here upon earth, can in his independence answer to his own Creator yes, or no. And so when our Lord said to the publican, "Follow Me"; and to the fisherman, "Follow Me"; and to Zaccheus, "Come down and welcome Me"; and to Lazarus, dead and entombed, "Lazarus, come forth"; these happy men made no resistance, but at once acquiesced. But, on the other hand, when the same Lord looked in His love on that young man who had spent his youth in innocence, and said to him, "Sell what thou hast, and follow Me,"* this chosen one turned his back on his God, and went away in sadness, because he had some possessions. Some possessions, alas! which this very Lord had given to him; and he clung to them, and chose them as his portion in place of his God, the Lord and Source of all possessions here and hereafter. What became in after life of this privileged one, this one picked out among the thousands, and called so specially to the banquet, we know not; but this we do know, that if he did not afterwards during his short stay upon earth unsay the answer which he gave to Christ on that melancholy day, that when at last his turn came to die, and he awoke in another world taken quite out of all the dreams and delusions of this wretched land of banishment, and stripped of all his poor possessions, he too did assuredly with anguish and affliction of spirit beyond all our imagining break forth into tho same piteous lament: "*Vidimus et non venimus*—I saw, but I did not come."

* Matt. xix, 21.

Not so with Mother Magdalen; she saw and she came, and her journey now ended, she has appeared before our Lord and His holy Mother, bringing with her the three gifts, her gold, her frankincense and her myrrh. For in the days of her youth, when health and the power of enjoyment were with her, by her deliberate choice she renounced the gold and silver of this world and chose by vow the poverty of St Francis. All those pleasant things that gold and silver can buy she sacrificed and gave them to her God.

At that same time, when her heart and her affections had all their energy, she chose by the vow of chastity to have for her Bridegroom Jesus Christ, and no other. And she undertook that life of penance and self-denial which is the myrrh that can embalm this corruptible body and preserve it in chastity and holiness.

She added a third and still better and more acceptable offering; for by the highest and holiest vow of obedience she made the sacrifice of self-will, which is man's chief idol and our God's arch-enemy; and by this most sacred and acceptable vow of obedience gave to her God the best that she had to give—her liberty and independence. And this supreme sacrifice is to the Heart of our Lord as the odour of the best and most fragrant frankincense.

Prostrate then, at the feet of Jesus and His Mother, she told her short story: "I saw Thy star, my Lord, and am come, come with my poor offerings, my gold, my frankincense and my myrrh."

What response did our Lord make to her; what manner of welcome did He give her? I know not; for, as I have already said, eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, the heart hath not

conceived, what kind of welcome Jesus has ready in His own world for them that love Him here. But this much we know, that her cry for us now is: "Mother of God, pray for them, that in what hour soever they see the star of Thy Son they may have the grace to follow it." Let us join, dear sisters, in communion with the saints; and uniting our hearts with the holy dead, let us also say heartily, "Mother of God, pray for us now and at the hour of our death," that the day of death may be to us also our true Christmas and Epiphany; and that when we die, Jesus, with His Blessed Mother by His side, may, as Holy Church prays, meet us with a meek and cheerful countenance; meet us, and welcome us; for then, overpowered by the mercy and the favour shown to us, beyond all hope and expectation, we shall begin to sing our everlasting canticle of grateful gladness: *Vidimus et venimus*—We saw Thy star, O Lord, and we are come. Amen.

R. I. P.

Kind reader, pray for her soul and the souls of all the Faithful departed.

VIII--Lady Georgiana Fullerton*

A Discourse preached at her Funeral, in the Chapel of the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Roehampton, January 23, 1885

Return, return, O Sulamitess, that we may behold thee.—
CANT. VI.

I DO not, dear brethren, call her back merely that we might have the comfort of seeing her once again in her old place, now with one group around her of her large family, and now another. Her large family, I say, her very large family; for who is there, brethren, among your acquaintance that has so large a following of children, of friends, of relations, of intimate belongings as Lady Georgiana had? Many indeed, I do not deny it; and wide-spread far and near are the circles whose mourning would change to gladness if she might come back. A traveller from childhood, her home has been at different periods in many different places—now in the great metropolis close by us; now in the city of fashion, of gaiety and of revolution, the capital of France; and then in holy Rome under the shadow of St Peter's, among the tombs of the martyrs, near to the Vicar of Christ. There, with special contentment, she sojourned. At times again she would

* This funeral discourse is a specimen of a vain attempt to serve two masters. The gathering round the coffin in this country often comprises Catholics and non-Catholics; and when we try to suit the wants and views of both, it will not infrequently happen that we content neither.

seek refuge from the cold of winter on the sunny slopes beside the Mediterranean, and at times on the less favoured southern shore of our own island. And everywhere she became the centre of a family of friends; and everywhere, through that marvellous gift of maternal sympathy for all in sorrow or in want which God had given her, she was, to borrow the psalmist's phrase, "the joyful mother of children."* Nor was there any clashing, any jealous rivalry between the family ties of blood, the claims of friendship, and the sacred bonds of heavenly charity; for with her all was in order, she was everywhere a peacemaker, a bond of union. When the heart is undisciplined, when affection is unruly, one is favoured too much and many are neglected, but grace does not create turmoil and confusion; and with Lady Georgiana all felt that her heart was large enough, and warm enough, and faithful enough to give them in good measure the share of love that belonged to them; and all believed that in her they had a true, a sincere and intimate friend. And even this little chapel—so happily, so suddenly, and quite by surprise chosen for this sacred rite—how forcibly does it bring to my mind the great power given to her to attract and bind hearts together in unity! For it is now a quarter of a century since I first saw her here during the spiritual retreat, her features lighted up with the animation of her ardent soul, drinking in the heavenly lessons of St Ignatius of Loyola which have helped so many to a holy life and a happy death. And I think I am right in saying that the eager joyousness, with which she welcomed the coming of those days of annual retirement and converse with God, spread like a

* Ps. cxii.

holy contagion from her soul to others. Here, as elsewhere, she was a leader, and many gladly followed; and they learned here to cherish high thoughts, aims and aspirations above this poor world. It reminds us of the Psalmist's words,* "After her shall virgins be brought to the King; her neighbour shall be brought to Thee," O Lord. "They shall be brought with gladness and rejoicing—they shall be brought into the temple of the King." Everywhere then, I say, she was a centre, and the glad mother of children.

This was one portion of the hundred-fold with which her bountiful Master repaid her after she had accepted from His hand the bitter chalice, the great, the crushing sorrow of her life. So sharp, so deep, so enduring, so agonizing was the wound left in her sensitive and motherly heart by the death of her only child, that I doubt whether there was one among those most near and familiar who ventured during the last thirty years, within her hearing, to whisper his name. It was not till quite lately, during her last illness, that she began at times to speak a few words of her secret grief; and as she turned her eyes to the curtain that always covered the portrait of this only son in her bedroom, she would say to her friend: "I wish I had the courage to draw it aside and look at him." And I well remember how, but a very short time back, on one of her days of great bodily suffering, as I was reading at her bed-side from the prophecy of Zachary our Saviour's promise to His Church—"I will pour out upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of prayer, and they shall look on Me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for

* Ps. xliv.

an only son; and they shall grieve over Him as the manner is to grieve for the death of the first-born"*—the tears that started from her eyes told me how I had touched a wound still fresh, and at the same time taught me to realize better the force and meaning of the sacred text.

Had some witness of that bruising of her heart in the noontide of her life asked, as the disciples asked of old: "Master, who hath sinned, this [youth cut off] or his parents?" our Divine Master would have answered gently: "Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest."† For that great sorrow was the beginning of greater grace and greater holiness. It weaned her from this passing world, and fixed her thoughts on that eternal home where our true Father, our good Father, our Heavenly Father awaits with yearning the coming of His exiled children. There our true joys are. There "neither rust nor moth consume, there no thieves break in to steal."‡ Her heart did not rebel against her good God who gave and who took away; but closer and closer to Him who had wounded her she drew; and from Him she had her hundred-fold. He who had made her childless enlarged her heart, and gave her to be the glad mother of many children. Wherever she went she was soon at home, and, as I have said, a mother to many. All those varieties which God has scattered over the earth, those national peculiarities, those diversities of character, those varying habits of different classes and conditions of life—the rich and the poor, the young and the old, the joyful and the mourners—they were no stumbling-block to her. She could welcome

* Zach. xii. † John ix. ‡ Matt. vi, 20.

them all. She could always weep with them that wept, and be glad with those who were rejoicing. Up to the day of her last illness she could take her part with her friends in an innocent game with so much of child-like heartiness and hilarity that sometimes she would reproach herself as if this were a fault, this power of becoming again a little one, as if she loved this life too well. To be with children, and take part in their gladness, was a recreation quite according to her own heart. She was ready for companionship with all.

And even when to the eye she was alone, apart from friends, she had a wonderful power—God's gift to her—of finding entertainment and companionship in His other works: in the waves of the sea, in the song of the birds, in the green leaves of the trees, even in the loveliness of one single flower, so clothed in beauty by the hand of God "that not Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these."* As she lay on her deathbed I heard her ask, in the simplicity of her heart, was it a sin that she had shed tears because the green leaves of spring were shutting out the sea from her and her eye would rest upon it no more? And if, as often happened, severe and painful illness imprisoned her so as to cut her off from the delights of scenery, even then she found a most congenial companion in some favourite book. The biography of some one among God's chosen ones was always to her a welcome friend. And if at times too suffering to read, she would beguile the hours and try to forget her pains by fixing her eyes on one or other of the pious pictures which she had gathered together for her consolation.

Lastly, I must not, among her companions,

* Matt. vi.

forget her pen, so often in her hand to help her to hold intercourse with one or other of her many distant friends by private letters, or to give pleasure and instruction and high and holy thoughts to many through her published volumes.

There are, then, a wonderful variety of scenes and situations in which her friends would like once more to fix their gaze of admiration upon her; but, as I have already said, it is not for such a gratification that I say to her: "Return to us, return." For all these things belong to "the fashion of this world which passeth away,"* as the apostle tells us. And let them pass. She certainly—now that she has entered into that stable and enduring world which never is to pass away, now that she has found her eternal home—she certainly would not willingly come back to the poor trifles of this dark world. No; as penitent David said when his child died: "Now that he is dead, shall I be able to bring him back any more? I shall go to him rather, but he shall not return to me"; † so must we say, brethren. This is the true word. We have to follow her and go to her, and that soon, very soon: she never shall come back to us. Had it been expedient for her to be called back to this world as Lazarus was, as Dorcas was, oh, what an array of widows and orphans and poor and needy we could gather together to plead for her return, weeping around this bier, and showing the coats and garments, the thousand comforts for soul and body which our Dorcas, "full of good works and almsdeeds,"‡ had provided for them! But, no; we have to go quickly to her: she is not to come back to sojourn with us.

When therefore I say to her, "Return," my

* 1 Cor. vii. † 2 Kings xii. ‡ Acts ix.

thought is rather, if perchance she might, since we are so soon to follow her, for a little while come back to tell us something of the world where she now is, and towards which we are hurrying so fast. This is why I say to her: "Return, return." But this, too, we know, is a foolish word; for our Lord has told us that we do not need spirits from the dead to teach us concerning the unseen world, since He Himself has taken care to reveal to us quite sufficient of the secrets of our everlasting home to enable us to know all that we need know about her present state and our own future prospects.

Of the things that have happened to her since her soul was called away by her Creator on last Monday afternoon, this much, brethren, we know: that in that moment when we who were watching could say with truth, "She is dead," in that same hour we could also say, "She is judged." For it is the hand of God that wrote that word: "It is appointed for all men once to die, and after death the Judgement."* While we on earth were saying, "Go forth, Christian soul," God's unseen messenger was saying: "Come, Christian soul, and give an account of thy stewardship." The night before our Saviour died He said, as you remember, brethren: "My Father, I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have done the work Thou gavest Me to do."† So must it be with each of us. In that moment when our last breath is drawn, we must each go back to our God who created us, that He may judge whether we have or have not done the work He gave each one of us to do in this world. May He, in His boundless goodness, grant to all of us so to prepare ourselves for our account,

* Heb. ix. † John xvii.

that we may have in that awful hour some share of her security.

And now, brethren, to understand some little how it would fare with her at the judgement-seat of Christ our Lord, let me call to mind that word of His: "Make to yourselves bags which grow not old, a treasure in heaven which faileth not";* and let me dwell upon them a little. All God's works on the face of the earth are good, as we read in Genesis; but still we must divide them into two great classes, as distinct from one another as night from day. Some of them are perishable, others are eternal. Some of them never fail, never fade; others grow old, or the moth consumes them. Even the body—so cared for, so precious, so admired, so pampered—alas, how it perishes! Poor body! thou must go back into the earth from whence thou art. "Under thee," said the prophet Isaias, "shall the moth be strewed, and worms shall be thy covering." † "To rottenness," said holy Job, "I have said: Thou art my father; to worms, my mother and my sister."* The body that cost so much, the most loved of all our perishable treasures, see how it fails us and crumbles into dust. And so, with a vast number of the good things of this earth, they have an end. On the wedding-day, in the very moment when a new life is beginning, Holy Church puts this word of reminder into the mouth of bride and bridegroom: "Till death us do part." It is a word that the Christian man ought ever to have near at hand to use it. When his eye is fixed on his child, on his house, on his land, on his merchandize, on his politics, on his pleasures, still let him say: "Till death do us part." For death

* Isa. xiv. † Job xvii.

shall come to part us from all these things. And then, what shall my occupation be in the long eternity? Nine months first in our mother's womb—that was not life. Then a few years in the valley of tears, the land of darkness—this is not life. Man, the child of God, was not made for this. The undying soul of man does not end its work so. What store then have we laid up as occupation, as food, as amusement, as contentment for the real lifetime of the undying soul? For "Man"—so writes the Holy Spirit of God—"Man shall go into the house of his eternity." * And his work on earth is merely to traffic and lay up such treasures as will not fail, as cannot be consumed by rust or moth; such treasures as even death, the arch-thief, cannot steal away from us. Let us fathom this truth a little deeper. When God created the living flowers and trees, He saw that His work was good: but He knew He could create a better life than theirs. Therefore He made the animal to grow as the plant does, but with a second and better life superadded, which gives him power to move and feel; and God saw again that the life of the animal was good. But again He knew that He had better things in store, and so He next created man, with the life of the plant in him, so that man can grow; with the second life of the animal in him, so that he can feel and move; but, in addition, He gave to man the life of reason also, so that he may think and speak and manage business: and God saw that the life of man was good, and very good. But this is not yet the perfection He intended. A man that can only reason; a man that can only by his reasoning powers buy and sell and manage the busi-

* Eccles. xii.

ness of this world, and study languages and the properties of plants and stars, of steam and electricity, does, indeed, some of his work in this world; but what is he to do in the everlasting world to which he is going? Will the languages he learns here serve him there? Will the coin that he gathers here pass current there? Our Saviour Jesus Christ—who alone among all who have trodden this earth has lived in that other unseen world—assures us that there we shall want another kind of life of a higher order than the common natural life of man.

Our Lord and Saviour makes known to us, out of His own knowledge that as no amount of careful culture can raise the plant to the level of an animal, or fit the beasts of the fields to consort with man, so no man can take his place with God in heaven till there is added to his natural gifts a higher kind of life, as real and as truly distinct from mere rational life as the rational life of man is distinct from the life of the dumb animals. Now, as the rational life of man is made up of understanding, of will, of eyesight, of hearing, and the rest, so this fourth kind of life, the supernatural life, is made up of faith, of hope, of charity. As through the eyesight and hearing and the rest we know the things of the present world, so by the gift of faith we gain, by believing, our knowledge of the world which we see not, but to which we are going. As through our desires and affections we crave after the good things of the earth and work to possess them, so by Divine hope we look for and desire and expect the good things of our Father's home in heaven. As by the natural love of our heart we cling to things and persons visible here, so by heavenly charity we love and cling to the

beauty of the unseen God and to the good things of His house. And this supernatural life is a reality, an indispensable reality. Therefore, in the darkness of the midnight hour, did our Lord say to that learned man, that master in Israel who came to Him to seek instruction in the dark, because he dared not in the daytime: "Amen, I say to thee: unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."* And when the astonished doctor exclaimed incredulously: "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born again?" our Lord and Redeemer answered calmly and earnestly: "Amen, amen, I say to thee: unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." That is to say, unless a Christian in that Sacrament which we, therefore, call the Sacrament of Regeneration—in addition to those natural gifts which God gives at their birth along with the sunshine to all men alike, both good and bad, saint and sinner—shall have infused into his soul the supernatural life of faith and hope and charity, that man remains in the eyes of God an incomplete and useless thing, like the still-born child, or like the deprived and helpless idiot. Mark, brethren, I pray you, what happens at times in this world. Fix your eyes on that man so perfect to the eye; observe his well-formed limbs, his fair proportions, his fresh colour, his smiling and comely features. Why are they hurrying him away from his dear home? Why have they hidden him out of sight? What is his crime? No crime, brethren; but by the visitation of God the use of his reason is for a time taken from him; and for all social and

* John iii, 1.

domestic work he is become an inutility, a hindrance, a danger, and he must be put away. Christian men, study this picture well, for even so is it done at the threshold of our eternal home with God. A man may have intellect, firmness of will and courage, tenderness and domestic affection; he may have, in fine, all the natural good qualities which are found among the heathen, and they are many; he may have all the education and civilization which unaided human industry and skill can reach to, but if that is all that he has, there is an immeasurable chaos between his condition and the state of that Christian man who is fit to be admitted through the gates of heaven.

You remember, brethren, with what a solemn emphasis our Lord used that word? "Cannot the heathen do as much as this?" * His argument is that which I have been urging: Let the ox or the horse be cultivated to the utmost perfection, still there is an impassable gulf between their state and the state of man. Even so between the heathen, the merely natural man, and the supernatural Christian—the man of divine grace who has in his soul the life of faith, the life of hope, the life of charity—there is a chaos, a separation that never, never throughout eternity, can be bridged over. We shall wonder less at this if we remember the peremptory and decisive words written by St Paul: "Without faith it is impossible to please God." † As the man deprived of reason can give us no pleasure, cannot satisfy us; so the man who has not faith never can content God.

Well, brethren, this being so, with this explanation I can now go on to say to you that the

* Matt. v. † Heb. xi.

one great and sustained effort of Lady Georgiana in the long years of her bereavement was to make for herself, as our Lord counselled her to do, the bags that grow not old, to gather those treasures that do not fail. Her aim, her thoughts, her aspirations were not any more for the things that pass away, but to increase her stock of divine gifts, of faith, of hope, of charity.

As the holy Duke of Gandia, Francis Borgia, standing by the coffin of his Empress Isabella, and seeing the havoc death had wrought, pronounced within his secret heart, as he gazed in silence, his solemn vow to God: "I never more will serve a mortal master"; so was it with the heart of this Christian mother when the grave closed over her only child: "No more shall my heart fasten on treasures that death can take away from me." And ever since that time her conversation has been in heaven. She has lived more and more by faith, by hope, by charity in that unseen world to which she has now been called.

The effect of this supernatural life which grew in her I shall more easily set before you if I call to your mind that prayer which the Psalmist made for himself: "Teach me, my God, goodness and discipline and knowledge."* These three graces make up a heavenly triple cord not easily broken: that complete and perfect holiness, of which God requires some in those who are to live in His eternal home. "Teach me goodness, discipline and knowledge." There is, as you know, brethren, a knowledge which has no goodness joined to it. In God's eyes that knowledge is unprofitable. Again, there is a kind of good-

* Ps. cxviii.

ness—as we sometime call it, good-nature—that is not schooled by discipline, a random and fitful goodness, which builds up and pulls down, which does a kind act to one, but to do it gives offence to many; which squanders gifts lavishly, but will not pay just debts. This is an unfinished, incomplete, most useless, and abortive goodness, that will not be admitted into God's house. He insists on our acquiring here on earth all these three graces—goodness and knowledge and discipline—which perfect one another and produce a holiness that can please God and give Him content in heaven.

Well, brethren, what I wish to leave impressed upon your minds is that Lady Georgiana did, by her spiritual industry, acquire all these three graces. She had goodness: but a goodness enlarged in length and depth and breadth, and in every way perfected by heavenly knowledge. She had goodness; but the goodness which, like the useful river, ever flowed within its proper bounds; and, like God's showers, came in due season and proper measure, because her goodness was combined with the holy spirit of Christian discipline.

First, then, I say, she had goodness, brethren; and to lose time in proving this to you would indeed be folly. For goodness, I may say, was her very name. Goodness was the striking and prominent feature on the surface, which remained impressed on the minds of all who came in contact with her. Holiness is at times rigorous and severe. There is a piety which is sometimes found associated with moroseness. And in this land of ours, where, through the malice and trickery of the father of lies, religious discord has made void the dying prayer of our Lord,

"My Father, that they may be one,"* a change of religion has often cruelly severed family ties. But in the case of this admirable lady goodness was, like the evergreen, perennial, lasting through all changes of seasons. Her conversation in heaven broke no earthly ties. As her heart grew wider and larger, and as the great family of her poor, and all their interests, became more and more absorbing, yet never did any of her most intimate friends detect the smallest diminution of that tenderness and warm affection which God gave her for each of those whom He had joined to her by ties of blood. Goodness was in her a ruling passion. Her love of giving pleasure was so strong that, had it not been ordered by the spirit of discipline and guided and enlightened by heavenly knowledge, its course might have left behind more waste than utility, more havoc than edification, more curse than blessing. Heli, the kind-hearted priest of of Judæa, was a specimen of goodness not perfected by knowledge, not kept in bounds by the holy spirit of discipline; and what more awful than God's condemnation of this unholy goodness: "I have sworn to the house of Heli that the iniquity of his house shall not be expiated for ever; for he knew that his children did wickedly, and did not chastise them!"† Bear then, brethren—once more I say it—this great truth in mind, that as the man who has strength and beauty and agility of body, if the use of reason be taken from him, becomes a worthless inutility and a burden; even so natural goodness and kindness of heart, if not perfected by that heavenly knowledge and holy discipline which comes through faith, is in the eye of God only

* John xvii, 11. † 1 Kings iii.

worthless idiotcy; an incomplete, unfinished, unsightly deficiency and deformity to be cast aside.

But to Lady Georgiana God gave, in the second place, a large measure of heavenly knowledge. That is, He gave her the gift of faith, and added a grace of spiritual industry and diligence; and by her faith—her power of believing what God has revealed concerning the unseen world—and by that holy diligence with which she laboured incessantly to learn, through prayer and meditation on the holy Gospel, through reading good books and listening with much docility to instruction, and through finding time for spiritual retreats, she acquired at last a large and deep knowledge of all that concerns man in that unseen world to which we are journeying. It is now more than twelve hundred years since one of the savage warriors of this island said in a council held in Yorkshire, to deliberate whether the missionary St Paulinus was to be murdered or to be welcomed as a teacher: "My countrymen, mark the flight of that bird which has come in and gone out again. Where did it come from? Whither has it gone? Such is our life here. If this stranger can tell us where we came from and whither we are going, let us listen to him." This is precisely what Lady Georgiana, from her study of Christian revelation, thoroughly understood—where each of us came from, whither each of us is going. "He came from God; to God he is going."* This, she knew, is the short history of every man. I am going back to God, to be examined once for all. If He find in me not merely the virtue that a heathen can reach to,

* John xiii.

but the divine gifts also, Christian faith and hope and heavenly charity—that is, if He finds true goodness, enlarged and perfected by heavenly knowledge and ordered and made holy by Christian discipline—then all is well for ever. I am fit for God's home in heaven. But if, in my traffic here, I have only gathered together those treasures that fail, that kind of good things which the rust and the moth and the thief can take from me, then am I cast away for ever, as a great inutility, a grand work of God spoiled for ever. So absolutely impossible is it to please God without faith; so utterly indispensable is that knowledge of the future world that comes by faith, that our Saviour—after He had guaranteed the teaching of His messengers by saying, "As My Father sent Me, I send you"; "He that hears you hears Me"—all meek and gentle and loving as He is, did not hesitate to pronounce that word, too much forgotten in our century: "Go and preach the Gospel: he that believeth shall be saved; he who believeth not shall be condemned." *

And now bear with me, brethren, a little while, and let me show you still more clearly how this heavenly knowledge acquired by faith enlarged and perfected goodness in the heart of Lady Georgiana. Among other revealed truths there was one that set as a seal upon her heart, as a seal upon her arm—that is to say, it left its impress on the desires of her heart and the work of her hand. I speak of the great revelation of our Lord that, as our Creator, He is the true type of all parental love, and goes infinitely beyond the tenderness of the most perfect father or mother ever seen on earth; and that there-

* Mark xvi.

fore He so identifies Himself with every one of His children here on earth, that at the judgement-seat He will say, if we permit Him, to every one of us: "Come, ye blessed, for I was hungry, and ye gave Me to eat; for whensoever you did it to the least of My little ones, you did it to Me."* This one truth, brethren, were it not now-a-days set aside and hidden away with the rest of the Gospel, how soon it would change the face of our unhappy nineteenth century! how it would solve the problems that are severing class from class, and lull the storms that rage between nation and nation, sect and sect, and bring on that great tranquillity which another word from our Lord's lips brought upon the troubled waters of Tiberias! When this revealed truth is not known, or not remembered, goodness and kindness of heart remain narrow and fitful and foolish: they give no true pleasure to our God.

Narrow, I say, in three ways. First, because such goodness is confined to those who are good to us, or to those who belong to our own village, or to those whose clothes are tidy and their faces clean and comely, or there is some other ruinous limitation. Secondly, narrow, because it gives its alms grudgingly, and only out of superfluities which remain after all our tastes and appetites and whims and fancies have first been gratified to the full—a very scanty residue indeed. Narrow, thirdly, because its aim is only to give to the poor and needy some comforts for the body, or some training for the mind that will at best serve them during the few and evil days of their sojourn here. At best, I say; for how often do we see these creature comforts

* Matt. xxv.

and this pagan mental training, when divorced from God's revelation and from the eternal life of man that is to come, prove a bitter curse instead of a blessing!

In the first place, then, brethren, Lady Georgiana believed firmly the word of God spoken to man: "Who touches you touches the apple of My eye"; and she believed that every man and woman and child of every nationality, of every class of life, of every shade of character, once born again by baptism, becomes God's child, God's image.

And it was this knowledge, this revelation, come to her through her faith, that enlarged her heart and made it Catholic—that is, wide as the world. Ask her that question which the Pharisee asked of old: "Who is my neighbour?" and she had knowledge ready to give the true Gospel answer: "Every one is my neighbour who has wounds into which I can pour oil and wine. Every one is my neighbour who has fallen among thieves, if I have the power to rescue him." The sun would set, brethren, before our work were done were I to put before you a true and faithful record of the activity with which the heart of this holy lady used, in sickness as in health, to travel all round the Christian world, planning and contriving relief for some sufferer, succour for some one in need.

Secondly, brethren, this heavenly knowledge of revealed truth took away all narrowness and scantiness from her almsgiving, and wonderfully multiplied her resources. For as she believed always that what she gave to the little ones of Christ she gave into the hands of her own crucified Lord—who had first loved her, and given His life for her—she could not endure to draw her alms

only out of her superfluities, but studied and studied economies and retrenchments from her own pleasures and amusements. And as she so studied, a fresh light from heaven burst in upon her, filling her with a new knowledge little dreamt of in the education of this world. Her eye had rested upon those words of our Lord: "Blessed are the poor," "Blessed are the poor in spirit"; and it began to dawn upon her that, even in high station, a Christian can be poor—one of the blessed poor of Christ our Lord. And what was the outcome of this discovery? Remembering the word of the Archangel St Raphael to holy Tobias—it is "honourable to reveal and confess the works of God"—I am afraid here, at the side of her bier, to disclose her secret, that the love of poverty and a loathing for the pride and pomp of life grew so strong in her soul that, by a sacred vow to God, carefully studied and well understood, she bound herself to practise, as far as her condition of life and family duties permitted, the evangelical poverty of the nun in her convent. By evangelical poverty I mean that happy and blessed poverty which St Paul describes so pleasantly as "having nothing but possessing all things."* Lady Georgiana well understood this voluntary poverty, so dear to our Lord. It was pleasant to her friends on earth—and I think also to God's angels—to hear her at times bemoan her poverty and laugh over her liabilities and anxieties. Where was she to find an alms to meet the obligations she had undertaken? By what contriving could she earn a little money? Would some publisher buy some effort of her pen, and give her something for her distressing case? Would some friend be inspired

* 2 Cor. vi.

to make her a present for her poor? "Having nothing and possessing all things!" Had she been arrayed in all the glory of King Solomon, brethren, would she have been more attractive to her friends and family than she was in her attire of modest Christian poverty? And which of you, had you known her wish, dear brethren, could have refused her request so often repeated by her: "Oh, tell my friends to spend upon the poor the money they will otherwise waste in garlands for my coffin. Let my funeral be as modest and as simple as may be."

It was, I say, her knowledge of the secrets of the world to come that thus enlarged the reach of her charity and multiplied the loaves in her hand, and gave her power to relieve so many, that it is safe to prophesy that from many hearts far and near will come the cry that has already reached us: "What shall we do without her?"

Again, I say, in the third place, brethren, that her heart, made large by heavenly knowledge, abhorred and loathed that narrow, counterfeit philanthropy, that cruel mockery of Christian charity which provides the poor and needy, the sick and suffering, and the helpless orphan, with a little bread, a few clothes, a little medicine for the body, and a little smattering of worldly knowledge, doled out on this condition—too awful, too profane, too horrible, and devised by no other than the arch-enemy of God and man—that there shall be no mention, no thought of the world to come; no education of the poor, dark child of this earth in that knowledge which God Himself brought down to this world to fit this very child for eternal life in heaven: nothing, in fact, but what the heathen has, so

that all the work of Christ our Lord is made void and utterly useless. The one desire of Lady Georgiana was like St Paul's when he said to King Agrippa: "I would to God that both in little and in much all should be such as I am, except these bands."* That is to say, her bodily pain and her crushing sorrow she would not have others share; but in all her blessings—in the possession of life eternal with God, in the triple gifts of faith, hope and charity, in goodness, and heavenly knowledge, and Christian discipline—in all these eternal treasures which she desired for herself, in these with her whole heart she prayed that all around her might share largely.

And here I will add one other point, in which we can see how much heavenly knowledge of revealed truth enlarged her charity and drove out all narrowness. The merely spiritual goodness of man, when it undertakes philanthropy, soon betrays the worm of death which is gnawing at its heart—the most unholy spirit of egotism. Of all such goodness—merely natural—it is written in the beginning of its book: "This charity must be *my* charity, *my* work! Perish other works of benevolence, so long as *mine* comes to the fore; and perish this, too, unless it is to be *my* charity!"

Well, brethren, one most marked feature of Lady Georgiana's goodness was that it worked underground, and through the agency of others. Her favourite thought was to say with the royal Psalmist: "I am partner, O Lord, with all that fear Thee," with all that work for Thy poor. She had a strict and intimate alliance—offensive, I may say, and defensive—with the religious Orders of holy women devoted to the poor. If

* Acts xxvi.

the Sisters of St Vincent of Paul are now busily toiling among the miserable and destitute of our large cities, the underground and hidden work of preparation that conquered obstacles, encouraged faint-heartedness, disarmed opposition, and collected resources for establishing them in this country, was done in great measure by the good lady now called away from us. If another Order has appeared among us to put within reach of humble working women all the graces of a consecrated life of charity, it is to the untiring efforts of Lady Georgiana—efforts that reached as far as distant Poland—that these humble servants of the Mother of God and all who benefit by their labours, owe this pious institute of charity. With not less zeal she threw herself heartily into the work of securing for the poor of London, and the upper classes of London, and also for the faithful departed, the services and edifying example of the Helpers of the Holy Souls. There are other devoted servants of the poor, with whom she was still more intimately associated, being quite one with them in heart and activity, serving them and helping them to serve and help the poor. Men knew not these things; but God's recording angels were ever writing down a faithful record of the charity of her good heart, enlarged and intensified by the heavenly knowledge that came to her through her faith.

I will now only add a little word, to show that her goodness was always schooled and trained and kept in its proper course by Christian discipline.

Her faith, her heavenly knowledge, taught her this: that undisciplined goodness is in God's eyes no better than depravity.

Her faith revealed to her the absolute necessity of this holy discipline. Her faith taught her the great lesson that Christian charity must begin at home, in this sense—that no man can rightly be good to his neighbour who is not first good to himself; that no one who is a slave to sin can labour wisely to make others free and children of God; in other words, that the thistle can never bear figs nor the bramble-bush sweet grapes.

Most humbly, therefore, and most sincerely, did she give herself to the labour of preparing herself by Christian discipline for the divine work of helping others.

Self-denial and self-control were always notable features of her goodness. Of an eager, ardent temperament and gifted largely with quickness of intelligence, yet her faith had taught her thoroughly the beauty, the glory of that short epitaph—if I may so speak—of our Blessed Lord, which sums up the story of His life: "He was subject." "Unless you become," our Saviour said, "as little children, you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven."* Her faith and the grace given to her made Lady Georgiana truly a little child, a docile child; and she grew to be as desirous of Christian obedience as she was enamoured of Christian poverty. Ardent, as I have said, and enthusiastic, and with a strong natural taste for organization, yet she would not set her hand to any work of charity that was not entirely according to order, and approved by all to whom she owed allegiance and obedience. The senses of her body and the thoughts of her mind and the affections of her heart were all subjected to Christian discipline. Detail is here

* Matt. xviii.

impossible. As one single specimen of the strict self-control she practised, I will mention that I think I am correct in stating that for many years she denied herself all taste of fruit, one of the few delicacies for which she had a relish. I believe, too, that all her most intimate friends and familiars would testify of her that with regard to that vice which degrades this world, that sin which Lucifer scorns as the peculiar sin of animal man, she followed most faithfully St Paul's holy teaching: "Let it not be named among you." Her heart was ever so diligently engaged throughout the day in ejaculations to God, to His holy Mother, and to the blessed saints that there was no place, no opportunity left for an unholy image. And yet she spared no pains to render herself by frequent contrition, by humble confessions, by acts of penance, by receiving many times each week the Blessed Body of our Lord, more and more one of the blessed clean of heart who shall see God.

Yes, brethren, her great ruling passion of goodness was ever under the control of Christian discipline. Hers was a charity that loved to build up without pulling down the work of others. Hers was a charity that could suffer and wait and hope and bear with much infirmity of character, and be content to work as God works, with defective tools, and was not easily disgusted or turned away by ingratitude or unkindness. It was that heavenly charity which St Paul describes: "That beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, and never falleth away."* Through her intimate knowledge of our Lord—that knowledge which came to her through faith, that knowledge which

* 1 Cor. xiii.

St Paul calls the supereminent knowledge, the knowledge above all knowledge—her good heart was enlarged and elevated high above the natural bounds. She learned to love rightly, as a disciple of Christ should love: to love widely, to love wisely, to love with the love of divine faith, which looks far beyond the grave into the unseen and eternal world. She learned to love with perseverance, in all seasons—in winter as in summer, in weal and in woe. In fine, she learned from her Divine Master to love as He loved, to love to the end.

I have trespassed long, dear brethren. My only excuse is that I leave untold a large volume of her sorrows and great sufferings, her joys, her hopes, her good works, kind words and holy thoughts. I have suppressed things more admirable than those I have uttered.

And now, dear brethren, on this festival of our Lady's Espousal with St Joseph—such a day as she would have gladly selected for these holy offices—let us lay in the grave the mortal remains of a good Christian wife and a good Christian mother. But first, here beside her coffin, and before we close her grave, may God, in His loving mercy, give us all a grace so to shape our lives during the little remnant of our course on earth, that after death and after our judgement we may find ourselves once more united with her. Now and for ever her thoughts are one with the mind of our Lord. If He at our judgement can say to us, "Come, My blessed," she too with ineffable gladness will say: "Come, come, thou blessed one." If He, our good God, is constrained with infinite sorrow of heart to say, "Depart," she too of necessity will say in sorrow ineffable: "Amen, depart." My

brethren, with our hearts united round this grave, let us join in an earnest and fervent prayer that of us, who have on earth revered and loved this faithful handmaid of our Lord, not one may be wanting when God reassembles all His children in His home in heaven.

R. I. P.

Kind reader, pray for her soul and the souls of all the Faithful departed.

IX--Charles Weld

Funeral words over his Remains, in the Church of our Lady Queen of Martyrs and St Ignatius, at Chideock Manor, February 3, 1885

Man, when he is dead, and stripped and consumed, I pray you where is he?—JOB xiv, 10.

"I PRAY you, my Lord Bishop, where is he? Where is your kinsman?" Tell me, my Rev. Brethren, if you can, where he is. And you, my brethren, say, Where is he? for in such a case as this the voice of the people is the voice of God. Put things together, and make a wise conjecture, that we may know—Where is he? With us, dear children, who are children of the Church of Christ, children of the one, the ancient, the holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, the absorbing question, as we stand by a death-bed, by a coffin, by a grave, is this: "I pray you, where is he?" I see that what we call death has come. I know that he is dead, and that he is stripped—stripped of all that this world had to give him—and that his body must now be laid in the grave to be consumed; but all this is immaterial. What my mind and my heart are busy about is this one question: Where is he? Where is he who still lives, and has not died? Where is his soul? His spirit that never shall die? And this question we have a right to ask and to consider it carefully, for we are the heirs and lineal descendants of those

early Christians to whom St Paul wrote: "We do not wish you, brethren, to be ignorant concerning them that are asleep, that you be not sorrowful even as others are who have no hope."* We have as our portion and birthright the faith of Christ and heavenly hope, and therefore we must not be ignorant concerning them that are asleep. We must study the case and condition of this friend now called away, and ask, not flippantly—God forbid—but thoughtfully and reverently: "I pray you, where is he?"

Outside the borders of the holy Church there is great ignorance concerning the dead. Wherever the teaching of the Holy Ghost is wanting, men always stray from the midway of truth, on one side or the other, to one extreme or to the other. To some, whose only heaven is this present world, death is nothing but bitterness—hopeless, joyless bitterness. So that even when they witness the death of God's saints, even then the words of Wisdom are fulfilled: "In the sight of the unwise . . . their departure was taken for misery, and their going away from us for utter destruction."† There are some again, on the other hand, who, because they have no hope, because they live and exist only for the things here present, are anxious to turn away as quickly as possible from death, to make all haste out of the house of mourning. Therefore, no sooner are the eyes of the departed one closed, than they gladly shake off all further responsibility by saying oracularly, and with a most painful levity: "He is gone to God; all is well!" They can now forget him, and go back to their amusements and their business. Such things we cannot do, brethren. We know too much about the

* 1 Thess. iv. † Wisd. iii.

departed to break off from them so quickly and so recklessly. We believe in the communion of saints: that between the faithful gone from us and the holy Church Militant here on earth there is a ceaseless intercourse. We firmly believe that in the other world there is a hell for the wicked, a heaven for God's saints, and a purgatory where, like good gold and silver, God's holy and acceptable children are for a time purified in the furnace of humiliation.* No wonder then that we find ourselves asking concerning the departed one who is dear to us: "Where is he?" To those who are once condemned to the eternal prison-house we can be of no further use; and the blessed already in heaven want not our help, unless it be to promote their glory and God's glory by procuring for them the honour due to God's glorious saints. But the holy souls in purgatory are for a time in need, in extreme need, a need of which we may say that it "passeth all understanding."† And, thanks to the loving arrangement of our good Father in heaven, we can follow them into their prison, where they must tarry till the last farthing of their debt is paid, and we can refresh them far more happily, far more powerfully, than when we were nursing by their sick-bed.

Within the borders of the holy Church, and nowhere else, is there knowledge—true knowledge—concerning the dead, and a proper charity and care for the holy dead, who are God's well-beloved and holy saints suffering for a time in purgatory. It is, then, allowable—nay, most commendable—it is a most fitting and becoming work, a pious office, a sacred duty, to stand

* Ecclus ii. † Phil. iv, 7.

thoughtfully and reverently and lovingly beside the dead and ask the question: "I pray you, where is he?" In other words, it is a holy and a wholesome duty to try to ascertain whether we are to sorrow for our departed with the dark, uncheered and dismal sorrow of those who have no hope, or whether it is good for us to be in the house of mourning; that is, whether our mourning is the holy sorrow of those of whom our Lord said: "Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted."* "I pray you then, where is he?"

The first fact that meets me when I begin the inquiry into the condition of the immortal soul of this loved friend, is that rumour spreads abroad that he, like two of his near kinsmen—men well prepared to die—died suddenly; that he was called away unexpectedly, that his friends were taken unawares, that the minister of God had no time to fortify him by those holy rites which Christ bequeathed to us on Mount Calvary to soothe and sanctify our death. What inference, think you, what conclusion are we to draw from these tidings? Why, brethren, most assuredly a sudden death, if it is also an unprovided death, is a calamity which Christian friends surviving cannot bear to think upon. If a man were habitually wicked, and were called away before Christ's delegate has time to use rightly that divine power which our Lord in His boundless charity entrusted to His ministry, when he said, "Whose sins you forgive they are forgiven,"† then, indeed, a sudden death is, to friends and relatives who loved the dead, agony unbearable; for they have ringing in their ears those terrible words which the Heart of our Lord uttered in

* Matt. v. † John xx.

deep sorrow to the hardened Jews: "You will die in your sins."* But, on the other hand, when a good man is called away abruptly and suddenly, must we sorrow as those who have no hope? How can we, when we have the words of the Holy Spirit before us: "The just man, if he be prevented by death, shall be in rest."† That is to say, if a just man is cut off, as we think, prematurely—before his time is come, as we should say in our human wisdom—we need not be appalled, for he is at rest.

The ground of this hope, which in such a case is within us, is this: that a sudden death is not necessarily an unprovided death. A sudden death may be, and often has been, a most blessed death. The holy Sacraments, which Christ by His bitter death secured for our deathbeds, are indeed a most precious gift, a comfort and a help to the dying beyond all price. This is so true that one reason, among many others, why holy Church has such a dread of mixed marriages is that experience has proved that, when a Catholic dies, surrounded by relatives and nurses who have not learned from holy Church how to care for the dying and the dead, the inestimable value of the holy Sacraments is never understood. Flimsy excuses are made for the most cruel and wicked delays. The holy anointing, which has from Christ our Lord a power to give back health when expedient, and to soothe the sorrows of the dying man, is kept out, and put off, and withheld, lest, forsooth, it should alarm and disturb! Mark, brethren, I pray you, this profane blasphemy: lest the sacrament which our Blessed Saviour, in His ineffable compassion, invented specially for the consola-

* John viii. † Wisd. iv.

tion of the dying, should alarm and disturb them and do them a mischief! Whence does such perverse and ill-timed prudence come, if not from that unseen father of lies whom our Lord calls "a murderer from the beginning,"* and who is always the more busy at death "because his time is short"?†

May our good God, then, dear brethren, grant to us, and to those dear to us, the grace to receive all the holy rites as a preparation for our departure. Still it remains quite true that death can be holy—most holy even—where no sacrament is administered. Our loving Lord, who instituted sacraments as channels to convey grace, can give grace, as He gave it to the dying thief, directly from Himself, without the intervention of any sacrament. Hence it is that there is, as we know, a baptism of desire, through which men can enter the Kingdom of God, even though the water has not been poured nor the sacred words pronounced. And as a fervent spiritual communion may bring great grace to the soul which hungers for the Body of the Lord but cannot have It, so, too, can our Lord, by graces unseen, supply the place of other sacraments. He can Himself absolve the contrite, though no mortal minister be there to say the word, "I absolve thee." He can anoint the dying; He can give food for the great journey, even though no priest of His Church be called in. And so "the just man if he be prevented by death shall be at rest."

This teaching becomes more approved by us when we remember that there is, as a rule, only one way of preparing for a good death, and that is by a holy life. Death is, we may say, only

* John viii. † Apoc. xii.

the last act of life; and the last act must ordinarily resemble those that went before. A man who has been ignorant through life will never, according to God's ordinary laws, become learned on his deathbed. He who has lived a negro will not die a white man. We shall die as we live.

Men, therefore, have sometimes asked the question why our good God, who declares to us so solemnly, "As I live, I do not desire the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live,"* does not at the outset of life make known to each of us how many years we have to spend on this earth, and in what year, what month, what week, what day we are to die, that so we might provide? The answer to this question is, I think, found in the second chapter of St John's Gospel, where the Beloved Disciple writes that Jesus did not trust Himself to men, "for that He knew all men"; "He knew what was in man." Our Father in heaven who created us, and our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us, know us too well and love us too well to cast us into such danger of eternal reprobation. For if now, when the time of death is a secret, we are so reckless, so foolish, so mad, what should we be if we knew that we had fifty years or more before us of life upon this earth? The unseen spirit of lying and wickedness, the enemy of God and man, would at once begin to urge us to give five-and-forty years at least to sin: since evidently—so he would assure us most persuasively—in the last year or so we could easily set all to rights. But our good God knows that if we sin for five-and-forty years we cannot so easily set all to rights at pleasure. He knows that habits of sin at last take from us entirely all

* Ezec. xxxiii.

grace and all wish to repent, and we die as we live. Hence, most wisely and most lovingly, He solemnly warns us that He will come "as a thief in the night, at what hour we know not." * And, therefore, His emphatic injunction to us all is: "Be ready."

How could He act otherwise towards us, my brethren? If He is good and holy, how could He consent that His own children should be wicked and most unholy during life, and only turn to Him at death? He must of necessity wish us to be here on earth such as we are to be in heaven; and therefore He keeps his own secret as to the time of our death, and says to us day by day: "My children, be ready; watch and be ready." This being so, brethren, one who has, by much prayer and by penance, by frequent confession and reception of the Blessed Eucharist, by daily attendance at holy Mass, and by all the other exercises of a Christian life, kept alive in his soul the heavenly fire of grace and divine love, may be much better prepared for death, even though he have not the consolation of the last rites, than another would be who had lived in sin, but at death had the help of the holy sacraments.

Still, some one might ask: why should not our good God vouchsafe to a faithful servant those last holy consolations which we all prize so much? My dear brethren, our good God has many children, and is thinking of them all; and sometimes He calls away suddenly one who is well prepared, that many sinners may remember His warning word: "Be ready." And thus one who has helped his neighbours and edified them during life, continues to teach them holy lessons

* Matt. xxiii.

even in death. From his coffin he says to us all: "Be ready." "Remember my judgement, for thine also shall be so: yesterday for me, today for thee."* So much, then, dear brethren, on the first point that we have to consider, that his death was, to the eye of men, sudden.

Now I go on to examine, reverently and carefully, his career on this earth, in order to ascertain whether he was one of those just men who, during life and in health, give heed to our Lord's warning and keep themselves ready; for we wish for an answer to the question, "I pray you, where is he?" Well, brethren, our Lord tells us by His prophet, Sophonias, that when His day of judgement shall come, He will "search Jerusalem with lamps"—that is, He will search each Christian soul with lamps; for every Christian soul is our Lord's Jerusalem, His holy city. Let us also search with lamps the ways and works of this much-beloved man who has been called away. But what lamps shall we employ, brethren? The Psalmist answers our question, for he says: "O Lord, Thy word is a lamp to my feet, a light to my paths." † We have in Holy Writ many words which reveal what life ought to be, if it is to end in a holy death. Let us apply some of them to the mortal career just closed.

In the fourteenth Psalm, the Psalmist puts the question: "Lord, who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle? or who shall rest upon Thy holy hill?" Is not this, my brethren, precisely what we want to know? What manner of life must he lead who wishes to rest with God for ever in His tabernacle, on His holy hill, in His eternal home? Well then, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the prophet answers his own ques-

* Ecclus xxxviii. † Ps. cxviii.

tion, "Who shall rest on Thy holy hill?" And the first word of his answer is this: "He that walketh without blemish."

Now, brethren, I venture to tell you humbly and frankly the impression that remains on my mind, after an acquaintance of more than forty years. I have always believed Charles Weld to be a man singularly innocent; a guileless man, a childlike man, who knew well how to be one of Christ's little ones. You who watched him more closely, and were more familiar, will judge whether my estimate be the true one. Meanwhile, when I read St James's word, that one of the two essential characteristics of "religion true and undefiled" is to keep oneself "unspotted from the world," * I ask myself, was not he kept by the grace of God wonderfully unspotted from this world—untainted by the contamination of this nineteenth century?

Again, when I read St John's earnest admonition to us all, "Love not the world, nor the things which are in the world," † I think in my heart that St John would have cherished him as a disciple according to his own heart. For surely, dear brethren, his heart was not fixed on this world, nor on the things which are in this world. You know how this same beloved disciple paints in a few words the most melancholy picture of that world of which our Lord spoke when He said, "Woe to the world because of its scandals." ‡ "For," he says, "all that is in this world is the concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life." That is to say, sensuality, riches, pride—these are the trinity which the men of this world love and adore with all their heart, with all their

* Jas i. † 1 John ii. ‡ Matt. xviii.

mind, and with their whole strength. Now the hidden life of Charles Weld in his retirement here was, I think, almost as thorough a protest against this wicked world and its three idols—its sensuality, its luxuries, and its pomps—as the life of the hermit in the desert, as the life of the monk in his cloister.

"Where a man's treasure is, there is his heart," * our Lord tells us. What, then, were the treasures, what were the pleasures, what were the favourite enjoyments, the special tastes of Mr Weld here in his privacy? Search them with lamps, and you find that all of them are innocent, many of them heavenly. In the natural order—among the things which God created for man and saw that they were good †—he loved domestic life. His marriage was one of those blessed marriages that make us understand the wonderful work done in Christ's Church by the holy Sacrament of Marriage. Again, he loved art, he loved music, and he loved study. Now these are innocent tastes; and when the grace of heavenly faith goes with them, they are elevated and sanctified as the water that is used in baptism is, and the holy oil of the chrism is. When, therefore, in the inspired page of Ecclesiasticus I read the words, "Let us now praise the men of renown, and our fathers in their generation," ‡ and then, looking down the page, find in detail the virtues of those "renowned men," that they were men who "by their skill sought out musical tunes; rich men in virtue, studying beautifulness, living at peace in their houses," I find myself saying within me: This is surely renown, better than the soldier gains; and here lies one who certainly never sought renown, and yet, in

* Matt. vi. † Gen. i. ‡ Ecclus xliv.

the secret privacy of his home, by maintaining peace in his house and by "studying beautifulness" and observing the precept which Ecclesiasticus gives to rulers set over a house, *Ne impedias musicam*,* put no hindrance to well-timed and innocent music, he had won renown true and precious; for he has died—to borrow the inspired word—"*dilectus Deo et hominibus*—beloved by God and man." Charles Weld inherited the love of music which prevailed at Lulworth Castle in the days when King George III used to visit there. He was also devoted to painting and to the study of all records which concerned the Catholic Church in England. He spent much of his time in decorating, with his own hand, the little church at Chideock; and it is to his industry and skill in painting that we owe many of the portraits of the English martyrs. One other word occurs to me which, like a lamp, will throw a light on the innocence of his retired life. It is St Peter's description of modest Christian virtues: "The hidden man of the heart, of a quiet and meek spirit, which is rich in the sight of God."† You who were intimate with this departed friend can say whether you think, as I do, that these words are a fitting portrait of him.

But now, my brethren, the Psalmist adds a second condition of that holy life which prepares us for a happy eternity with our God. Not only, then, must a Christian man avoid evil and live unspotted, but he must "work justice," that is, he must do good. The reason is evident; for, as holy Job tells us: "Man's life on earth is a warfare, and his days are like the days of a hireling."‡ A Christian is then, of necessity, a soldier. He is also God's servant. Now from

* Ecclus xxxii. † 1 Peter iii. ‡ Job vii, 1.

a soldier and a servant we look for something more than harmless idleness, if indeed idleness can be harmless. I say, if idleness can be harmless; for the prophet of God, Ezechiel, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, teaches us the important truth that one of the causes of the terrible wickedness of Sodom was "the idleness of her sons and of her daughters."* This much at least is certain, that to fallen man God said: "Thou shalt eat thy bread in the sweat of thy brow." And this law is not for the serf only, but for the gentleman and the serving-man alike. Their industries no doubt may differ in their character; but according to God's appointment, as we read in the 103rd Psalm, "The sun ariseth, and man shall go forth to his work till evening." This, I say, is God's arrangement for us all. And when that awful day shall come, on which the Lord shall search us all with lamps, how many of the gentle and the noble and the high born will find out, too late, that sins unnumbered committed by others—the frauds of tradesmen, the dishonesty of servants, the degradation and ruin of innocent serving-maids committed to their trust—are all traced up to their guilty idleness! They eat their bread in idleness, and did not "look well to the paths of their house."†

Charles Weld's was not an idle life. It was quiet, it was hidden, but it was full of activity; not indeed of that restless, feverish, unhallowed activity of these days, in which the passionate desire for rapid enrichment stimulates men to preternatural energy, while God cries aloud in vain: "*Vacate, vacate:* Be still, ye children of men, and see that I am God." ‡ And so, "With desolation is all the land made desolate, because

* Ezec. xvii. † Prov. xxxi, 27. ‡ Ps. xlv.

there is no one who thinketh in his heart" * in these busy days. This good man called away from us was in a much wiser way industrious. He was one of those who "work justice."

To work justice means to be just to ourselves, just to our neighbours and just to God. There are men full of business, full of activity, who have the name of serving their country devotedly; but all the while to themselves they are most unjust, for they do nothing, absolutely nothing, for their immortal souls. "Attend to thyself," † was St Paul's earnest counsel to his holy disciple—*Attende tibi*. Charles Weld had learned that lesson. He never shrank from the labour of prayer, nor from the prescribed fasts, which he observed with more rigour than was of obligation. His hours of prayer were like those of the religious in his convent. He had inherited that love of the holy Mass which is so precious an heirloom in some Catholic families, and so hopeful a sign of God's predilection. His confessions and his reception of the most Blessed Eucharist were as regular as if he had lived under rule and obedience; and as the end of life approached, his hunger and thirst for these heavenly helps increased, so that on as many days in the week as his strength allowed he received the Blessed Body of our Lord, always after diligent preparation made, and with prolonged thanksgiving. The day before his death he approached the holy table, and would have done so again on his last morning had he not yielded to urgent entreaties to spare his strength. We speak of his death as sudden, brethren, but God's angels and those who knew his secret are aware how continual was his preparation for a holy death; how often

* Jer. xii, 11. † 1 Tim. iv.

he expressed his desire to receive the holy anointing; how constantly he held in his hand his little book of preparation for death. It is now about three months since for the first time I visited this little church, and on my arrival here he made haste to tell me that he wished to make a careful general confession, to prepare himself for his last end. He was, then, assuredly a man who was just to his own soul by not neglecting the "one thing necessary."

And in being thus just to himself, he was necessarily at the same time just to God. For God our good Father so identifies Himself with man, His child, that our interests are His and His interests are ours. "Glory to God on high and peace on earth to men" was the Christmas carol of the angels around the crib; for the two must go together. The Christian man who by prayer and penance and the holy sacraments maintains peace in his soul necessarily gives perpetual glory to God.

Again, we are just to God so long as we follow St Paul's rule, "Honour to those to whom honour is due,"* that is to say, we are just to God so long as we give Him the honour due to Him. Well, dear brethren, not to take up too much time by travelling over too large a surface, let us confine ourselves to this little church where our Lord Jesus Christ dwells amongst us. Assuredly, a Catholic gentleman, who has our Saviour as a guest dwelling under his roof, incurs serious obligations through this great privilege. Was Mr Weld unmindful of this? Did he ignore his responsibilities? Did he forget our Saviour's Presence here? If there was in this country a Catholic layman who could

* Rom. xiii.

say with truth, "O Lord, I have loved the beauty of Thy house," * was not he that man? Some gentlemen put their trust in horses, some in chariots; his trust, his delight was in "Thy altars, O Lord."† Out of retrenchments and careful economies—for he never was a wealthy man—and with the toil of his own body and the willing sacrifice of his leisure, he strove to prepare this dwelling-place for our Blessed Lord.

This was the way in which, in his latest years, he worked out justice to God and to himself; for in the spring-time of life he was in the front rank of the Catholic gentlemen who toiled and laboured to break the chain that still bound the consciences of poor Catholics in this country. Not from any love of ease did he retire from this public warfare, but with an aching heart he withdrew from the battlefield at the sacred call of duty, to "work justice" elsewhere in a more hidden but not less laborious way.‡

And now, brethren, I pass on to say a rapid word on the third great branch of justice—justice to our neighbour.

Here is one of the surest and safest tests to apply when we wish to judge of our own chances or the chances of those dear to us at the judgement-seat. We must then shortly call to mind certain promises often repeated in holy Scripture. First of all the wonderful word of our Lord which tells us that at this sacred tribunal our doom will certainly be determined on this one point. "I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat"; or, "I was thirsty and you gave Me not to drink." Then that other word inspired by the Holy Ghost. "Alms shall be a great confidence before God to all them that give it."§ Then again the word

* Ps. xxv. † Ps. lxxxiii. ‡ See Appendix. § Tob. iv.

of Ecclesiasticus: "Shut up alms in the heart of the poor, and it shall obtain help for thee against all evil."* When we find a clear promise that alms will obtain help for us, not indeed against all kinds of sufferings—for some sufferings are blessings to ourselves and great graces which God gives to His chosen ones—but against all *evils*, and, above all, against the evil of sin and the supreme evil of an unholy death and an unfavourable judgement; if we meditate on these texts, and countless others in which our blessed Lord has expressed to us in different ways His assurance that "from the merciful all these things shall be taken away, and they shall not wallow in sins,"† we shall come at last to believe firmly in the marvellous power of merciful almsgiving, and find ourselves able to realize—at least, in some degree—such golden promises as that conveyed to us by the Prophet Isaias: "Deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the needy and the harbourless into thy house; when thou shalt see one naked cover him, and despise not thy own flesh: then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy health shall speedily arise, and thy justice shall go before thy face and the glory of the Lord shall gather thee up."‡ Yes, "thy justice shall go before thy face." Thy justice to God, thy justice to thyself, thy justice to thy neighbour, shall stand as it were in front of thee at the judgement, and thy sentence will be the word of ineffable sweetness, "Come to Me, thou blessed one;" and at once "thy light shall break forth as the morning," for "the light of God's countenance will be stamped upon thee" for ever,§ and "the glory

* Ecclus xxix. † Ecclus xxiii. ‡ Isa. lviii.
§ Ps. iv.

of the Lord shall gather thee up," for the Lord of all glory shall say to thee: "Come, thou blessed one, come into the glory of thy Lord."* If at death a Christian man has still any adversary whom he has wronged and who has anything against him, this calamity will bar his happiness till the last farthing be paid; but if no adversary appear to accuse, then the Lord will not deny the glorious invitation: "Come, thou blessed one."

This being so, I ask of you, brethren, is there, to the best of your knowledge, any adversary among his relatives, among his neighbours, among his servants, his tenants, or any others dependent on him, or lastly, among the poor of Jesus Christ—who has a complaint against Charles Weld?

And here let us note with care each clause of the Psalmist's description of the good man, who "works justice" to his fellow-men. He requires a man that "hath done no evil to his neighbour," and then specifies in detail that he must be a man "that speaketh truth in his heart, and who hath not used deceit in his tongue." Well, brethren, it would be too long a task for to-day to search with lamps all the words of this departed one; but this much I think I may say, and say without fear, that in the most vital points of all, he was eminently a man that spoke the truth in his heart, and did not deceive his fellow-men with his tongue. In this unfortunate land, in which the people followed like sheep their wicked rulers, and flung away the ancient truth, there has ever been a small remnant of faithful men, to each of whom we might apply the inspired words of Ecclesiasticus, "He shone in his day as the morning-star in the dark cloud."† Charles

* Matt. xxv. † Ecclus l.

Weld was one of these. Here, in the midst of a dark storm of senseless animosity against ancient Catholic truth, his face shone brightly and calmly and noiselessly as a star among clouds. There was no disguise of his religion, no base attempt to serve two masters. He confessed Christ before men fearlessly; yet by his meekness and his charity and his prayers he changed the angry hearts of those who greeted his first coming into this neighbourhood with all the bitterness of bigots into the kingly hearts of friends. His value for the ancient Catholic faith of Christ was so rooted, so intense, that I may say that it became his ruling passion. Where was the real home of his heart if not in Rome, the city of faith, near to the rock of ages? Who was the chieftain that could command at any hour the loyalty of this chivalrous man, if not the Vicar of Christ? Who knew all the sacred spots and hallowed corners, if I may so speak, of the Eternal City better than Charles Weld? "Set Me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thy arm,"* our Lord had said to him. His heart was full of Christ and His saints. And the special delight of his hand was to pourtray the dying English martyrs of Christ, or the loveliness of some virgin of Christ, or the beauty of some holy sanctuary of Christ or His Blessed Mother.

In the next place, dear brethren, the Holy Spirit requires that he who "works justice," and aspires to rest for ever on God's holy hill, shall be a man who "hath not taken up a reproach against his neighbour";† that is, a man who is so fair-minded, who has in him so much of Christian honour and Christian humility and Christian

* Cant. viii. † Ps. xiv.

charity that he does not encourage and welcome tale-bearers, nor mischief-makers, nor slanderers with the poisoned tongue. A man "in whose sight the malignant is brought to nothing";* that is, one whose very silence, whose countenance, pained and confused by the very presence of malignant calumny and detraction, chides and awes to silence any one inclined to wrong the absent. Whether this was the spirit of this Christian gentleman, you can say who lived with him.

Meanwhile, without fear or hesitation, I can award to him the commendation that follows in the inspired picture of the just man: "He glorifieth them that fear the Lord." For if there was in England a home where those who fear the Lord and serve the Lord were respected and honoured, and if there was a home most gladly opened to welcome a priest of the Lord needing repose or nursing, that home was, as you well know, brethren, the Manor House of Chideock. And I may add something that perhaps you do not know so well, that on the first outbreak of the revolution which has since robbed the Vicar of Christ of his dominions and despoiled and driven into exile the religious Orders of Rome, Charles Weld, then present in Rome, devoted himself to the work of protecting those most likely to fall victims in the tumult;† and, later on, a very large alms has gone every year from this house to maintain the impoverished and banished Fathers of the Society of Jesus at Fiesole. Educated in childhood by the Jesuit Fathers, he continued till death so true, so generous a friend, that I am quite sure that the aged and venerable Father General, now himself

* Ps. xiv. † See Appendix.

standing on the edge of his grave, when he hears the tidings that Charles Weld is dead, will at the holy altar pray with all the gratitude and tenderness of his loving heart that eternal rest may soon come to his long-tried and well-beloved friend.

And here, I think, I may be excused for saying that the resting-place selected for his mortal remains, near to the altar of St Ignatius, as well as the souvenirs of the three Jesuit Fathers, so dear to him in Rome, buried with him, as he wished, in his coffin,* is a happy funeral arrangement, in keeping with the faithful friendship of his life.

And now, brethren, we come to the last feature required by the Holy Ghost in the beauty and loveliness and the justice of his soul who hopes to live with God for ever. Such a one must be a man that "hath not put out his money to usury, nor taken bribes against the innocent." Now on this point I think Mr Weld was one of those who firmly believed in that counsel of the Holy Ghost: "Lay up alms in the hearts of the poor."† The interest and usury he coveted was the good will and blessings of the poor. On one of those ancient monuments in the Roman Catacombs, among which he loved to dwell, this short epitaph stands inscribed as the only record of a departed Christian gentleman of the third century: *Amator pauperum!* How well it would suit this grave that we are to close to-day. *Amator pauperum!* It is but a little while since there was found written on his gateway by the hand of some poor stranger: "God bless Squire Weld; he is good to the poor!" As our Saviour said of St Magdalen when she poured the fra-

* See Appendix. † Ecclus xxix,

grant ointment upon Him, they did it for his burial. They were writing his funeral eulogy. "He was good to the poor"; and not only out of his superfluities; for, as in the case of old Tobias, his own, who loved and admired him, have expostulated when they saw him refuse himself apparently necessary comforts that he might have more for the poor.

And now we shall lay his body in the earth. And I need not urge you to remember in your prayers his pious soul, because among the poor of Christ he had a special tender charity for the holy souls in purgatory. And the man who does not forget them during life will not himself be forgotten after death. For it is written: "Blessed the man who hath understanding concerning the poor and needy"—and who so poor, so needy, as God's holy children in purgatory?—"Blessed," I say, "the man who hath understanding concerning the poor and needy, for in his evil day the Lord will deliver him."* As he remembered, and did not forget, during his lifetime the sore wants of the faithful departed, so now his good angel will remind others to plead for him.

Here, then, is our answer, brethren, to the question we had to consider: "I pray you, where is he?"

His body must go back to the earth whence it came. His spirit is gone "to God who gave it."† "In the sight of the unwise"—as the Holy Spirit tells us—good men "seem to die: *Illi autem sunt in pace*—but they are at peace." Amen. Amen.

R. I. P.

Kind reader, pray for his soul and the souls of all the Faithful departed.

* Ps. xl. † Eccles. xii.

APPENDIX III.—Charles Weld

In addition to the very interesting memoir of Mr C. Weld, already published in the *Tablet*, the following notes, extracted from some private letters, will, I hope, be welcome to his friends and edifying:

1. *College life at Stonyhurst.*—"He was foremost in his class; quiet, gentle, and not at all inclined to quarrel. I can well remember that his ordinary companion was James Etheridge," afterwards a member of the Society of Jesus, Rector of St Beuno's College and Bishop of Demerara. "*Pares cum paribus*—Birds of a feather," etc. "Though not enthusiastic for athletic sports, he was a favourite among us all." At the Christmas plays he showed so much talent, especially in pathetic acting, that the Superiors were afraid of encouraging the gift too much. "His life was a model to his contemporaries, and a joy to his friends and guides. Gifted, impulsive, and with all the sensitiveness of genius, still there was no want of submission to Superiors and to rule." Later in life he became fond of sports, such as shooting and fishing.

2. *Youth in the world.*—"When I first went to London to study the law—in November, 1838—the Catholics I associated with were all talking about Charles Weld. He was then a young barrister of great promise. He was spoken of as being very clever, and likely to be a great credit

to English Catholics. He was eight years older than me, and therefore I was more with younger men in social life. I cannot say that I was very intimate with C. Weld, but I knew him well and saw him frequently. From my own family connections, I was naturally thrown at first with what I may call a *good set;* and my uncle, with whom I was living, invited C. Weld to dinner—chiefly, I think, with a view to my making his acquaintance. I distinctly remember the impression that he made upon me, that a young man might live a lawyer's life in London, and try to get on at the Bar, and at the same time keep God's commandments and be of use to the Church. He was leading a life that was a real example."

"It was said of him that, in walking in the streets, he always kept his eyes down. I have noticed this myself."

"One thing I always admired in him was that he said he never refused an alms to any young girl who begged of him in the street, especially at night time. When some one observed that he might be imposed upon, he said that he would prefer being imposed upon than run the risk of their being tempted, in consequence of his refusal, to get food or lodging by sin."

"He belonged to the Catholic Institute from the beginning. He was, I should say, the right-hand man of his uncle, Mr Charles Langdale."

"As an instance of the esteem in which he was held by Catholics, I may mention that when Wright's Bank failed, he was chosen, though then under thirty years of age, as one of the assignees, in order that he might represent the Catholics who had suffered."

"Unfortunately, as I think, he did not perse-

vere at the Bar. He ought to have been Mr Langdale's successor as leader of the Catholics."

His retirement from the Bar was by some of his friends attributed to his sensitive and shy nature, which was easily depressed and discouraged. Others thought that his passion for art drew him away from the law. Those who knew him most intimately assign another cause. He was eminently a dutiful and affectionate son; and during his law life in London subjected himself to most severe privations rather than draw upon the resources of his father, which at that time were not ample. The fear of being a burden to his parents while making his way at the Bar, influenced to a great degree his determination to abandon his profession.

"I remember that one of the first things I heard about him was that he was one of the chief promoters of the work of the Propagation of the Faith, then recently introduced into England. He was also, I think, at one time, Secretary to the Associated Catholic Charities."

"When well in health and in good spirits, he was exceedingly amusing and witty." It was a great pleasure to his friends to hear him read aloud passages from the standard authors, both comical and serious. He possessed in a high degree the dangerous talent of drawing amusing caricatures, and freely exercised it; but no single instance is remembered in which there was any trace of ill-nature in his work. "Indeed, he never caricatured any persons unless it were to their face and for their own amusement."

3. *Rome.*—"His life there was a perpetual pilgrimage amongst holy places, persons and things, combined with a devoted and devout study of the highest Christian art." Overbeck

was his master. "Under a holy old abbé, formerly leader of the Pope's choir, he cultivated his musical talent carefully." His taste was for the old English school of music and for the sacred music of the great German masters and the music of Palestrina, and "the indescribable beauty of the great chants and hymns of the Church." He also sang comic songs with zest and great effect, "but avoided, like the sensitive plant, the smallest touch of coarseness," and, on this account, not unfrequently used his talents to alter the words.

"He knew Christian Rome as his own home, and with a love and reverence above all earthly spots."

"Many were his intimate friends at the Roman College," and at the Gesù. The cassock of the General, Father Roothaan,* and the girdle worn by Father Glover, and the biretta of the celebrated missioner Father Rillo he kept till his death, and they were buried with him in his coffin. He was, however, shy and reticent when conversation turned on any men of note with whom he had been intimate.

When the Revolution broke out, he escorted the Father General of the Society, who was disguised, through the streets of Rome to a carriage in waiting, in which he accompanied the holy exile to a safe distance. Then returning, he mounted guard over Father Glover.

* It was the one which the Very Rev. Father General was wearing just before he put on his disguise and stepped into the carriage with Charles Weld to make his escape. His devoted affection in that hour of need made a very deep impression on the warm heart of Father Roothaan, who during his exile came to England and visited the Convent of Newhall. There a sister of Charles Weld, Mother Aloysia, was introduced to him, and with much emotion he exclaimed: "Mon excellent Charles! Charles qui m'a sauvé!"

In 1871 he was one of the deputation to the Holy Father. His physician warned him that he was unfit for the journey, but remarked that "it was of no use, as he was sure to go." When he reached Rome he was so ill that "it was with difficulty he crossed the Piazza on Easter Sunday to hear Mass," and he suffered severe pain when he went with the rest to wait on the Holy Father.

"He was an antiquarian of no mean standing, but especially in the matter of the English martyrs, to whom he was very devout, and in whose canonization he took a deep interest. He was summoned as a witness at the preliminary proceedings for the beatification held at the Oratory in July, 1874. One proof of his zeal in this cause is the collection of portraits of the English martyrs preserved at Stonyhurst and at Chideock, which are the work of his hand. He laboured with great industry to find the relics of Father Cornelius, S.J., and other martyrs who suffered in his own county of Dorset, and only ceased his search when he learned from a friend that after the Great Fire of London, in 1666, four vases had been found bricked up in a wall of the French Ambassador's house in Blackfriars, one of which contained a head marked with the name 'J. Cornelius.' This head had been fixed on the top of the gallows, and was there seen by Miss Dorothy Arundell of Chideock resplendent with light."

4. *His spiritual life.*—"Not many days of his life could be counted on which he missed week-day Mass, unless actually keeping his bed from illness." This was his habit to the end. On the last day of life he assisted at Mass. "Even if he had to walk a mile or two, and sometimes more,

he would still be at Mass." "Once when confined to bed by gout, when his nurses had gone to Mass, he slipped himself down the staircase on hands and knees, and so contrived not to miss the Sunday Mass." "He always preferred several Low Masses rather than one High Mass." "Even when his strength was failing, he insisted on walking a long mile to church and back again before breakfast, rather than miss his Sunday Communion, though he had to walk the two miles again for Mass."

"His whole life seemed to be one unceasing testimony of his ardent faith and love of God, of His saints, and—oh, how filially!—of the Immaculate Mother of God."

"For his good father, he was all that a son could be in loving respect and acquiescence to his will and wishes. His devotion to his saintly mother seemed akin to what he felt for the Blessed Mother of God."

"Children were strongly attracted towards him; and when they approached him, his sympathy with them was thorough, but he waited for them to make the first advances."

This is but one instance of his natural shyness and inclination to retire.

"He had no tone for a servant or a poor person different from that to an equal. To the aged it amounted almost to reverence. Always courteous to a woman, he would offer the best place in the carriage to an attendant; and when consulted, as a magistrate, by a woman, he would listen with quiet patience to unintelligible loquacity."

"There were few cases of servants leaving his service by their own choice. Never would he hear of servants being attended in illness

at their own cost, or sent home without provision."

"His almsgiving was altogether beyond proportion to his income, and could only have been carried on by strict economy and denying himself what to most would seem the ordinary requirements of his position."

Indeed, there seems reason to think that his valued life might have been prolonged had not his unwillingness to spend on his own comfort been so great. For other necessary expenses he was always ready. His great desire was to improve his property for the benefit of those who were to come after him, and to see that the poor around him were well cared for. There was a standing order in his house that good soup should always be ready for poor persons passing by who wanted food. Seeing that by care and self-denial he always had money in hand for all useful purposes, his friends used to tell him in joke that he was the richest man in England. He took great pains to conceal his almsgiving and to give relief to the sick without their being aware that he was their friend. At times, however, when his duties allowed, he would visit any sufferers within reach, and knew how to comfort them by his warm sympathy.

"He would carry out this sort of charity even when he had no reason to think very well of the antecedents of the sufferer. When they really needed help, all was forgotten."

"His special pleasure was to help friends whose means were small, and, above all, to receive into his house some priest disabled for his work."

"His blood boiled at any extreme rigour of the law applied by the bench of magistrates

against some poor person who had stolen a turnip, or a child trespassing for sticks, or brought up for not going to school when wanted at home to help its parents in their need. He was very indignant against a policeman who, in plain clothes, hid away in the manor grounds to watch near the priest's house to find out whether a poor man begged, in order to take him up. By the goodness of God's providence it was so arranged that "at the very moment of his death there was a group of poor persons waiting for their soup—and very touching was their distress and sorrow."

Five of his sisters were consecrated nuns in different Orders; and "his extreme devotion to them, and how much in return they loved him, words cannot express." Strongly he felt and strongly he spoke whenever bigots raised a cry against convent life. His last speech was one in favour of the liberty of nuns, and it is described as one of commanding eloquence.

He had an affectionate heart, which inclined him to treasure not only the relics of saints, but also whatever reminded him of relatives and friends dear to him in times past.

To him, as to His other faithful servants, our Lord gave at times a share of His bitter chalice.

Of the absent he spoke sparingly, and with great caution. "He preferred to speak of things rather than of persons."

The little church beside the manor house was an alms which he gave to our Lord out of his necessities. And so assiduous was he in the work of adorning the house of the Lord with the portraits and emblems of his favourite saints, that it must be acknowledged that he fulfilled the

rule, "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread." *

Dilectus Deo et hominibus.

5. *His Mother, Mrs Humphrey Weld.*—Like so many other good men, Charles Weld was the son of an exceptionally good father and mother. The Honourable Mrs Humphrey Weld, whose father was Lord Clifford and whose mother was a daughter of Henry Lord Arundell, was married young and had nine children—five daughters and four sons. Of these nine children all the five daughters embraced the religious state in different convents, and her second son William entered the Society of Jesus, and, just before receiving priest's orders, died a martyr of charity in India serving the plague-stricken. She herself was over sixty when by the death of her husband she became a widow. The natural solace of her bereavement would have been the company of her children. A widow in such bereavement would ordinarily have spent a good part of each year in visits to the several convents where her daughters were consecrated, and to her old home at Chideock Manor, where she was always sure of a warm welcome from her devoted son. But it was no surprise to those who knew intimately her spirit of sacrifice to find that she renounced all these legitimate consolations, and went to beg very humbly for admission as a postulant into St Benedict's Priory. A postulant at the age of sixty-five is not always welcomed by religious Superiors. They are aware that many ladies of that age would come to the convent with habits formed that could not easily

* Gen. iii.

be moulded according to conventual life. Their aim, in fact, and ambition would be to become, if I may so say, honorary nuns rather than realities. The Superiors, however, of St Benedict's Priory had known Mrs Humphrey Weld intimately, and they thought it quite safe to make an exception in her favour, nor was their hope disappointed. For I have read in a letter, written after her death by the Mother Prioress, these words: "Our gratitude to God for giving her to us during the few last years of her precious life is far greater than I can express." From the account preserved in the convent annals of her short religious career it is evident that she was not merely a nun so called by courtesy, or a lady in nun's clothing, but was in very deed a model nun who in a short time arrived at the perfection of her state and did the work of many years. Symptoms which seem to the uninitiated trifling, will often reveal to the skilled physician the whole character of an internal malady; and so do very small incidents often suffice to enable those experienced in spiritual life to form a true estimate of sanctity. It chanced on one occasion that Bishop Ullathorne gave an exhortation to the nuns, in which he insisted much on submission of the judgement. Sister Theresa Chantal—so Mrs Weld was called in religion—was surprised that he dwelt so long on this point, and asked some of the other nuns the reason. When they explained to her that to many it is very difficult to give up their judgement, her answer was: "Well, I daresay what you tell me may be true of some younger Sisters who are clever, but for those like me, who have no judgement or intellect, the case is different." Another instance recorded of her amiable humility and charity is

this. Certain nuns had each a flower-bed to cultivate, in order that they might have flowers for the altar committed to their care. If a nun in this case had taken a pleasure in adorning her own altar as well as might be, no one would have been surprised; but Sister Theresa used to give her best flowers to another nun, saying: "Your altar is in a more conspicuous position than mine: it should have the best flowers." I will only mention one more fact recorded of her, but one which suffices for many. Novices in St Benedict's Order have to learn many rubrics and many customs new to them. When corrected for not observing exactly one of these customs or rubrics, the correction, instead of inflicting a wound, as it commonly does, was to her a great joy. It is not necessary to multiply such pious details. Those who knew her intimately assure us that the instances here given are not more than average specimens of her virtue.*

That she was able thus quickly to adapt herself to religious life in her old age does not surprise us when we learn something of her life as a married woman. The austerities she practised in family life were such that the religious Superiors, instead of training her to penance, had to rein in her fervour and to moderate her practices. We may form some idea of her habits from an incident still remembered of her life at

* One very signal instance of submission of her will and judgement she gave before her death. She had been for years subject to very violent attacks of illness, for which bleeding had always proved the best remedy. On the first attack in her convent life the doctor reluctantly bled her and she recovered; but he said that at her age he would not do it again. She made no reply, but subsequently said to one of her sons; "At my next attack I shall die." And so it turned out.

Chideock Manor. She was an excellent sick nurse, and understood well how to manage the ordinary maladies of the poor around. It chanced very early one morning—somewhere about six o'clock—that her services were wanted. They went to search for her through the house and in the chapel, and through the grounds and even in the houses of some of the poor of the neighbourhood; but no one thought of going to her room, where she was suffering from an attack of illness. All knew that her habit was to be at work even at that early hour. And she did not find her long day too long for her occupations; for she was the sacristan in the chapel; she was Sister of Charity for the sick poor round about; she was often, when wanted, the schoolmistress in the poor schools.

I have mentioned above how low an opinion she had of her own intellectual powers, but others had a very different idea of her. Her good sense, her practical wisdom—both in things spiritual and temporal—as well as the wonderful sweetness of her character, made her the trusted confidant and counsellor of many friends and relatives, and secured for her the most devoted attachment from her children, and kept her memory still in benediction among the poor.* Neither must we imagine that the sacrifice she made in the latter years of her life of companionship with her children was rendered easy by an apathetic nature. She was ardent and sanguine, and her motherly love for her children was intense. Even in the convent her eye was lighted up whenever she

* When Charles X was driven out of France, he landed at Poole in Dorsetshire, and there he was met by Mr and Mrs Humphrey Weld, who conducted him to Lulworth, where he, like so many other exiles, found a home till the English Government put Holyrood Palace at his disposal.

heard of them; and the early death of her Jesuit son, we are told, was nearly a death-blow to her, though when she parted with him as he was setting out for India she had a firm conviction that they were not to meet again in this world. It was grace drawn down from heaven by continual and fervent prayer that enabled her to conquer the world and to be a valiant woman. Even when working with her hands her heart was speaking familiarly with God. "Blessed," says the Psalmist, "are the undefiled in the way." She was one of those blessed ones who pass through the changes of this changing world blameless and undefiled; and so we are not surprised to find that in her death there was no sting, for "sin is the sting of death."*

After receiving the Holy Viaticum, her exclamations were: "How good God is! how good He has been to me, especially in bringing me to the religious life! Oh! I am so happy!" When asked to bless her children, her answer was: "Yes, I bless them; and ask them to pardon all the disedification I have ever given them." It was suggested to her before her death that if she asked she might obtain permission for her sons, whom she fondly cherished, to pay her a parting visit. Her answer was: "My sons, I am sure, would rather make the sacrifice than contravene the spirit of the Order." On the last day of her life, while the community were at Mass, she asked one of the nuns to bring her profession veil and blessed candle, and then renewed her vows with great fervour. One of the sisters, while reading prayers to her, came upon a passage that spoke of the tribulation of the soul when death is near, and turned to

* 1 Cor. xv.

her, saying: "Dear sister, this will not suit you; you have no terrors, have you?" "No, she answered; "I am very happy and in great peace." A quarter of an hour before her death she was conversing calmly with her confessor and Rev. Mother. The change came suddenly, and she expired without a struggle on the feast of her great patron St Joseph.

R. I. P.

Kind reader, pray for her soul and the souls of all the Faithful departed.

X--William Joseph Middelton*

A Discourse over his Remains in the Chapel at Myddelton Lodge, March 4, 1885

We will not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that you be not sorrowful even as they who have no hope.—1 THESS. iv.

FOR our own sakes, my dear brethren, and for the sake of the dead, it is most desirable that we be not ignorant concerning their condition.

First of all, I say, for our own sakes; for their story is ours. "What is it," Ecclesiastes asks, "that hath been?" "The same that shall be:" is the inspired answer. "What is it that hath been done? The same that shall be done." † For death is not an accident that only befalls one or another among luckless and ill-fated men. Neither is it a chastisement reserved for great criminals. True, we see it written over the condemned cell in the gaol, "The wages of sin is death"; ‡ but the proper interpretation of this text is that given in the same Epistle by St Paul himself: "By one man sin entered into the world and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned." § "In whatsoever day thou shalt eat of it," God said to our first father, "thou shalt die." ‖ A certain share in that sin and its consequences we all inherit.

* As many friends not Catholics attended Mr Middelton's funeral, Catholic doctrines are explained in this Discourse more fully than would otherwise have been necessary.

† Eccles. i. ‡ Rom. vi. § Rom vi. ‖ Gen. i.

Among the rest, "it is appointed," as the Apostle writes, "for all men once to die, and after death, the judgement."* Such is God's ordinance. "For we have not here an abiding city," we are pilgrims, and "we seek one that is to come."† To every one of us God's angel speaks in the words of the prophet: "Arise and depart, for there is no rest for you here." It is a decree for all without a single exception, "Man shall go into the house of his eternity,"‡ and this house of his eternity no man can reach without passing through "the gates of death." "The learned dieth," Ecclesiastes says, "in like manner as the unlearned"; the saint as the sinner. On the same day and near each other died Jesus, God's Holy One, and Judas, the son of perdition. We, too, shall die, dear brethren, and that presently: therefore for our own sakes we must inform ourselves concerning the state of those that are already fallen asleep.

In the different books of holy Scripture there is much revealed to us concerning the state of the departed. In order not to weary you by wandering over too wide a field, I propose to limit myself to one passage which I shall consider along with you.

In the third chapter, then, of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, St Paul tells us something of what happens to Christians after death. May we have the grace to understand His teaching and to lay it up in our hearts. "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death."

The words of St Paul to which I allude are familiar to you, my brethren. "Other foundation," he says, "no man can lay but that which

* Heb. ix. † Heb. xiii. ‡ Eccles. xii.

is laid, which is Christ Jesus. Now if any man build on this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be manifest; for the day of the Lord shall declare it, because it shall be revealed in fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide, which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work burn, he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved yet so as by fire."* These words, brethren, are full of useful lessons concerning the state of the Christian dead. The Apostle begins by telling us that "other foundation no man can lay but that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus." In other words, all those who are in the end to be saved must have Jesus Christ as the foundation of their sanctity.

Now there are more ways than one in which Christ Jesus must be the foundation of Christian holiness, but I will only say at present that a firm belief in Jesus Christ must be the foundation of all holiness. "Without faith," writes St Paul, "it is impossible to please God."† And when our Blessed Saviour sent His apostles to preach in His place and in His name, this was His commission to them: "Go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: he that believeth not shall be condemned."‡ This language is very clear and very strong. Equally clear and strong and unmistakable are our Lord's words to the Pharisees: "I go, and you shall seek Me, and you shall die in your sins. Whither I go, you cannot come." A moment later He gives them the reason of this severe sentence. "You are from beneath," He said to

* 1 Cor. iii. † Heb. xi. ‡ Mark xvi.

them, "I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world. Therefore I said to you that you shall die in your sins. For if you believe not that I am He, you shall die in your sin."* You see, brethren, the cause of this condemnation is that they do not believe in Him. After He has given them abundant proof of His divine mission, they remain obstinate and will not believe. If their want of belief had been the result of ignorance He would not have condemned them so sternly. This He made clear at the Last Supper, when He said: "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. If I had not done among them the works that no other man had done, they would not have sin, but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father."† Culpable disbelief, then, or a want of faith in Jesus Christ, which comes through our own fault, is an everlasting barrier between the soul and God.

But now, dear brethren, what do we mean when we say, "I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?" In the ninth chapter of St John's Gospel we read that our Blessed Saviour, after curing the blind man, said to him: "Dost thou believe in the Son of God?" He answered and said: "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" And Jesus said to him: "Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee." And he said; "I believe, Lord; and falling down adored Him."‡ In like manner we read in the eighth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, that when the officer of Queen Candace riding in his chariot had heard St Philip's teaching concerning our Lord and said: "See, here

* John viii. † John xv. ‡ John ix.

is water, what doth hinder me from being baptized? Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. He answering said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?"* So too you remember how at Cesarea Philippi, when our Lord put this question to His disciples: "Whom do you say that I am?" St Peter made answer: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God." For which profession of faith in Him our Lord commended him most strongly, and said: "Blessed art thou, Simon son of Jonas, for it is not flesh and blood that has revealed this to thee, but My Father who is in heaven."†

Now here we have three instances of men believing in our Lord Jesus Christ; and it is highly important for us to know what they mean when they say that they believe in the Lord Jesus. I think it quite evident that their meaning cannot be that they merely believe the fact that Christ died for them. For in two out of these three cases our Lord had not yet died. This phrase, "I believe in Jesus Christ," must mean far more than this. What, then, does it mean? Why, brethren, it necessarily means that I believe that He is the Son of God and God; and consequently, as He is come to teach, I believe that He is the Eternal Truth, and therefore I firmly believe everything that He has taught or is teaching or shall teach.

If a Jew who heard our Saviour preach went home to his family and said: "I like very much what I heard Jesus preach to-day; but of course I cannot answer for what He preached yesterday when I was not present, nor for what He may preach to-morrow, since I have not as yet heard it," this man has not faith. He likes certain

* Acts viii. † Matt. xvi.

doctrines which he has heard, because they suit his taste or his views, but he has not faith in Jesus Christ.

A man who has faith, and believes our Lord to be God, and therefore the Eternal Truth, does not wait to hear His teachings one by one, and to criticize them one by one; but before our Lord has opened His mouth is quite ready to say: "I accept all that He is going to teach, because He is the true God and the God of truth." Such a man may not have had time as yet or opportunity to hear or to read and study the whole of our Lord's Gospel; on some points he may be as yet quite ignorant, but if he says from his heart, "I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and am quite ready to accept all His teachings as soon as they shall come before me," that man has true faith. On the other hand, a man who reads the Gospel of our Lord and says, "I very much like the doctrines contained in this page, but I cannot bring myself to say that I accept all that I read in other pages; nor indeed can I bring myself to think that a man who cannot believe all these doctrines will not be saved," this man, whatever other good qualities he may possess, has not the necessary gift of divine faith, has not faith in Jesus.

A man who has faith is ready to believe and profess every doctrine contained in God's revelation without one single exception, because one word that comes from God's mouth must be as true as another. When, therefore, he hears St James's injunction: "Is any man sick among you, let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and if he be in sins

they shall be forgiven"; * he answers at once: "*Credo*—I believe." When he hears our Lord saying to His appointed ministers: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven"; he answers: "*Credo*—I believe." When he hears our Saviour say: "He that will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican"; he answers: "*Credo*—I believe." When he hears our Saviour say to Peter: "Thou art Peter: and on this rock I will build My Church; to thee I will give the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven, whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven"; he answers: "*Credo*—I believe, my Lord and my God." Again, when he hears our Saviour say: "There shall be one sheepfold and one Shepherd"; † and to St Peter: "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and thou, being once converted, confirm thy brethren"; and do thou "Feed My sheep and feed My lambs" ‡: that is, feed My whole flock—the clergy and the laity, the parent sheep as well as the lambs—he does not resist, he does not obstinately run from one quibble to another, but answers willingly: "*Credo*—I believe." This is true faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. But when a man merely makes selections from the Gospel of Christ, and takes the doctrines that suit him and ignores those that suit him not, this is not faith. To this way of treating God's revelations the Apostles and the early Fathers give a very different name: they call it *heresy*, a word that signifies picking out; *and heresy they denounce as one of the worst of crimes.* That it is an awful crime any thoughtful man will, with God's help, easily understand.

* Jas. v. † John x. ‡ John xxi.

For to pick out certain words of God and say, "I believe them"; and to refuse belief to other words that come from God, *is evidently to treat God as if He were a fallible man, who sometimes speaks truth and sometimes lies.* And, moreover, that heresy is a much more heinous crime than dishonesty, than anger, than lust, than many other grievous sins, can be shown in two ways: *first, because as faith in Jesus Christ is, as we have seen, the very foundation of all Christian holiness, if the foundation perishes the whole fabric necessarily perishes, and all Christian holiness is destroyed;* whereas, though man have sinned by dishonesty, by anger, or lust, if he still preserves the Divine gift of faith, the foundation being still there, the damage done may be much more easily repaired.

Again, how terribly grievous the sin of heresy is may be seen from this: that our Lord Jesus Christ, on the last night of His life, expressed to His Eternal Father the wish of His Heart *that His disciples should be one;* and St Paul only repeats the wish of our Divine Master when he says to us all in his letter to the Ephesians: "Walk worthy of the vocation in which you are called; careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace: *one body and one spirit, as you are called in the hope of one calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.*"* Is not this plain language, brethren? Can there be a doubt but that our Divine Master wished His Church to be one large sheepfold; one large family, with one heart, one visible body, one spirit, one Gospel, one doctrine, one faith, one sacred deposit of truth and holy sacraments? Satan well knew our Lord's great wish for unity;

* Ephes. iv.

and seeing that when He urged the Jews to crucify Jesus he had entirely gone wrong in his policy, since the crucified Lord is risen again, he now bends all his efforts to defeat the one wish of our Saviour's Heart by preventing unity among His disciples. His aim ever is to multiply creeds and sects, till at last the confusion of Babel is come back again; and in this nineteenth century —that is, eighteen hundred years and more after the work of our Lord was done on this earth, and He from His cross uttered those solemn dying words: "*Consummatum est*—My work is done," well done, thoroughly done—here still we have men groping about in the darkness, and asking with Pontius Pilate, "What is truth?" as if our Lord had never taught; and fighting with so much animosity about religious belief that it is true to say that neither thirst for gold, nor the passion of lust or ambition, has caused so much discord, so much bloodshed, so much hatred, as strife about religion has done. What a triumph for the father of lies! What is the conclusion? Why, that either St Paul is wrong in telling us that faith in Christ is a necessary foundation, and was wrong when he wrote to St Timothy that our Lord "wishes all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth"; or, secondly, what is a still worse blasphemy, we must say that our Blessed Lord did not know how to do His work, how to secure unity, and how to bring all men to the knowledge of the truth; or, thirdly, we must say what is true, that men have been most lamentably duped by Satan, and led into the most appalling wickedness when they consented to give up Divine faith, and, instead of believing all Christ's Gospel, made each one for himself a profane selection that accepted

some words of God and rejected others, as if God were fallible and a liar, as man is.

This much have I said, that you may not be ignorant concerning the dead, because I believe —and it gives me great consolation to believe it—that he whose body lies dead under this shroud was one of those who, though part of his life was spent in the very midst of modern scepticism and unbelief, yet lived and died with the old-fashioned Catholic faith of his forefathers sound within him. Again and again, as his end was drawing near, I have heard him say: "I wish to die in the one Catholic Church."

And now, brethren, we pass on to the rest of St Paul's teaching concerning them that sleep; and we learn from him that among Christians who have that true and sound faith within them which is the foundation of all holiness, there are some men who build with gold, some with silver, some with precious stones, some with wood, hay, or stubble. And observe, dear brethren, that according to his teaching, when such men pass out of this world, taking their works along with them, as St John speaks,* some of their works are found at the judgement-seat to be good and durable and worthy of everlasting reward: others are only hay and stubble that must burn in the fire and be lost. "The fire," he teaches us, "shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide, he shall receive a reward: if any man's work burn, he shall suffer loss." And again further observe, brethren, that when the apostle here speaks of men whose work burns he cannot be speaking of the wicked who are cast into hell, but of God's elect; for in the very next lines he says that he whose work shall thus

* John xiv.

burn shall be saved, "yet so as by fire." What have we here, brethren, but our own familiar doctrine of purgatory? Now, what is the doctrine handed down to us from the beginning on this point? It is that, owing to our carelessness and want of fervour, many men who are yet true disciples of Christ—that is, who firmly believe in Christ Jesus, and have in their souls that Divine faith which is the foundation of Christian holiness—do not live up perfectly to their faith; do not always build as they ought, with gold and silver and precious stones, but sometimes throughout their lives mix stubble and wood and hay with the gold—that is to say, they by slothful neglect fail to make due reparation for grievous sins committed; and, besides this, they entertain thoughts, speak words and do actions which, though not grievously criminal, are not fit for heaven, and in this condition they die with an impure dross mixed up with their holiness, which must be burned away before they can enter heaven. For the assembled Church of God in heaven must be utterly free from wrinkles and from stain.* Our Eternal Father, then, who is in heaven, and who is the true and perfect Father, and has immeasurably more compassion for His children than the best of mothers ever felt, seeing our frailty and fickleness, and knowing that we are dust, has in His boundless compassion arranged that after death His servants who die in His grace shall have a time and place in which they shall sin no more, but can sorrow and repent and make reparation for sins and negligences committed and not sufficiently repaired during life. True, most true, it is that at the moment of death our eternal doom is

* Ephes. v.

fixed. As Ecclesiastes writes: "If the tree fall to the south or the north, in what place soever it shall fall, there shall it be."* At the moment of death the Judgement takes place, and the soul hears its final sentence: "Come, you blessed"; or, "Depart, accursed." All this is true; but it is equally true that when once the departed soul has seen its God at the judgement-seat, it becomes so enamoured of His beauty, His goodness, His holiness, that it cannot endure to enter heaven till it has gone away to hide itself in the place of purgation, till every sin and fault and negligence of life past shall be thoroughly repaired, till all mixture of unholiness is burned out, till it can enter into heaven free from spot and stain. For all the faithful departed who have even for one moment seen our Lord, feel that heaven would not be heaven, would not be the fitting home of Christ and His saints, if even one soul was there with sin or the traces of sin upon it. Most gladly then, most gratefully and full of filial love for their heavenly Father and for Jesus Christ whose Blood has saved them, the holy dead go for a time into that prison-house, of which our Saviour said that we cannot come out again until we have paid the last farthing of our debt.† Most thoroughly content the holy souls departed are to tarry there until the last farthing is abundantly paid. This ancient Catholic doctrine concerning purgatory and the souls of the faithful departed was, with many others, proscribed by Act of Parliament in this country three centuries ago. It was denounced as a modern corruption, invented by covetous priests. Alas! that Satan has so much power to dupe us with

* Eccles. xi. † Matt. v.

his lies; to make void all the revelation of Christ with his lies; to destroy the unity for which Christ toiled and bled by his lies! By a lie he ruined our first parents, and by ceaseless lying he deceives and ruins us. Why, brethren, if purgatory is a corruption invented in modern days by wicked priests, how came St Paul to preach it so implicitly and in such detail? How came our Lord to reveal to us so plainly that there is in the next world one prison in which "weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth" shall be eternal, in which the "worm shall never die," from which the dark smoke shall ascend for ever and for ever; and another prison out of which the Christian shall come forth when he has paid the last farthing? And again, dear brethren, if the doctrine of purgatory be a fond invention of greedy priests, how does it happen that on the sacred pages, written a hundred and sixty years before the coming of Christ our Lord, we read those familiar words: "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins."* We believe this Book of Machabees to be a portion of the inspired and canonical Scriptures; but even if it were only an Apocryphal book, still it is good history, and records the belief of the ancient Jews, and that Judas after a battle took care to have sacrifice offered for his dead soldiers. Was not this single passage sufficient to prevent unhappy men from accepting the fable propagated by the father of lies and the father of discord and the enemy of God and man, that the doctrine of purgatory is a corruption of modern times? Thank God, we have not lost this ancient belief in purgatory. Thank God, we

* 2 Mach. xii.

are not ignorant on this point concerning them that sleep. For, my brethren, to speak plainly and in all sincerity, if it were true, as our countrymen are told, that there is no purgatory, no chance of purification after death; if I must believe that at the moment of dissolution the man whom I see in his death struggle must either be found entirely free from spot and stain and quite fit for heaven, or must find the eternal gates barred against him for ever, and hear, when he knocks, the dismal and irrevocable answer: "Too late! too late! Amen, I know you not"; I cannot understand how any thinking Christian man could face the death-bed, or stand as we do beside the bier. For how many are there, brethren, who go from this world without some stain upon them? It is this doctrine of purgatory—so worthy of the clemency of our loving Father, who does not wish the sinner to perish—that emboldens us to stand by the death-bed and stand by the grave with great peace and hope in our hearts, saying: "*Requiem æternam dona ei Domine*—Eternal rest give to him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him."

Another Christian truth which helps us greatly to have right thoughts concerning the faithful departed, is the one which from childhood we so often repeat: "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." Knowing that Satan's great effort with man is to persuade him that our heavenly Father is not merciful, but severe and rigorous; to induce men as he induced Cain to say: "My iniquity is greater than that I may deserve pardon"; * to persuade men, as he persuaded Judas, first to betray our Lord, then to despair af forgiveness, and then to betray and doom

* Gen. iv.

himself, our Blessed Saviour has bound Himself to us by this sacred compact that so long as we hope in Him and His love we shall never be confounded. And He wishes us from our cradles to be taught ever to remember and never to forget this great truth: "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." Even if sins be red as scarlet, I believe that in the Church of Christ there is forgiveness for them, and they are made white as snow. To make this Divine truth more palpable, and in order that all mankind, to the very poorest and most illiterate, might clearly understand that there is forgiveness of sins in His Church, our Saviour said solemnly to the men whom He appointed as His delegates: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven."* To men, sinners themselves and deeply conscious of their own infirmity, their own need of mercy and forgiveness, He said: "I send you in My place: whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven." This, brethren, is an invention of the same merciful Father who provides the waters of baptism for the remission of sins, and purgatory to do away with the effects of sin, and whose sole desire is that the sinner shall not die for ever, but shall be converted and live. It is simply to render forgiveness easy, to bring pardon and mercy within the reach of all, that He arranges this simple system: "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven." When David had fallen, and fallen most grievously, God sent His prophet to him to upbraid him; and as soon as the penitent man uttered the word "*Peccavi*—I have sinned," the inspired messenger of the Lord immediately replied: "And the Lord hath taken away thy sin."†

* John xx. † 2 Kings xii.

Here is, dear brethren, our Blessed Saviour's merciful, most merciful arrangement for His Church. Kneel, Christian man, whatever thy guilt has been. Kneel and say that one word which is sweet music to the ears of God—that one humble word—say it from your contrite heart, "*Peccavi*—I have sinned"; and at once His delegate is commanded to say in answer to you: "The Lord hath taken away thy sin. In the name of Christ and by His power I absolve thee"; and He has bound Himself that what is forgiven on earth shall be forgiven in heaven. "The Lord has sworn it, He will not repent."*

My brethren, Mr Middelton, around whose coffin we are gathered, was, thank God, one of those who firmly believed in this promise of Christ and in the power which He gave to His ministers when He said: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven." And during the last years of his life especially, as he saw death and judgement approach, urged by the spirit of faith and true Christian prudence, he grew more and more desirous to make humble confession of his sins and to secure for his soul the priceless blessing of sacramental absolution. At the time of the great religious revolution in this country, three hundred years ago, it became the fashion to say: "I will not bow my knee to man to ask for pardon, I will go direct to my merciful God." But who was the inspirer of this thought, brethren? Whose suggestion is it? If I hear my Lord and my God say: "Unless [you] be baptized with water, [you] cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven,"† shall I lift up my head in my wisdom and say to Him: "What can a drop of water do? I must have grace direct

* Ps. cix. † John iii.

from my God, without the use of water?" If I hear my Lord say: "Go ye and preach: he that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be condemned," am I authorized to reply: "Lord, You must teach me Yourself, with Your own lips; I care not to deal with men, Your delegates"? Or shall I make answer and say: "Really, I cannot undertake to believe all these dogmas preached to me; I must be admitted into heaven by some simpler plan"? And when I hear the Lord of Glory say, by His messenger: "Call in the priests of the Church to the dying man, and let them pray and anoint him with oil, 'and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and if he be in sins they shall be forgiven him,'" am I showing my good sense by answering: "Let me die without this rite; I shall have my sins forgiven in some other way"? If your friend, your relative, your master, my dear brethren, whose funeral you are attending, had lost the ancient faith and become besotted with this kind of presumptuous foolhardiness, it would be agony unspeakable to stand to-day beside this grave. But, knowing how he believed firmly in the forgiveness of sins by sacramental absolution, we are not sorrowful with the joyless sorrow of despair that death brings to those who have no hope.

One word more, brethren, I will add that explains, corroborates, and commends to us St Paul's doctrine concerning the faithful who die in the Church of Christ. It is the word that our Lord Himself revealed to us concerning the judgement that follows after death. Christ, our Blessed Saviour, has made known to us what is to happen to us at the judgement-seat, and we are astonished to find from His revelation

that this awful scrutiny on which our eternal doom depends is simplified in such a way that all is reduced to one question: "I was hungry, did you give Me to eat? I was thirsty, did you give Me to drink?" Our sentence depends on the answer given to this one question. Other sins are not mentioned. No word is said of breaking the Sabbath, of neglect of prayer, of luxury, of all the other many vices. What means this strange silence, brethren? The fallen angels are there to do their work of accusing—for their name of devil signifies the accuser, the slanderer—but they are not listened to. The catalogue of sins is not heeded. How is this, brethren?

Simply because our Lord, in His infinite desire to save His own children, the work of His hands, and for whom He has shed His Blood, has bound Himself by this most holy covenant: "Be merciful, and you shall find mercy." Of course, we know and believe that if a man die with any one grievous sin upon his soul he never can enter heaven; but I think, my brethren, that if we carefully study the teaching of our Blessed Lord we shall see that it is equally true that no man that does his duty in almsgiving and works of mercy will be allowed to die in grievous sin. Am I saying too much, dear brethren? Let us see. I find the inspired Prophet Daniel saying to King Nabuchodonosor—one of those gigantic criminals who from time to time appear on the earth and fill the world with blood and every kind of horror: "Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to thee, and redeem thou thy sins with alms, and thy iniquities with works of mercy to the poor, and perhaps He will forgive

thy offences."* But you will object that he only says, "Perhaps" God will forgive you. Well then, brethren, listen to what our Lord Himself says to criminals far worse than Nebuchodonosor, to the very Scribes and Pharisees, against whom He uttered so often and so sternly that awful word, "Woe to you, ye Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites"—wretched men for whom our meek and merciful Saviour had no milder name than these, "You serpents, you generation of vipers, you whitewashed sepulchres"—and yet in the midst of all His terrible menaces to these apostles of sin and wickedness, after again and again warning them, "You shall die in your sins," He adds these wonderful words of clemency which offers them a way out of all this wickedness: "For the rest give alms, and all shall be made clean to you." †

Do you want still further evidence, brethren? Then listen to the Holy Spirit uttering, by the mouth of Ecclesiasticus, this promise: "Lay up alms in the heart of the poor, and it shall obtain help for thee against all evil." ‡ Or listen again to this other inspired word of this same Prophet: "Water quencheth a flaming fire, and alms resisteth sins." § That is, alms has the same power against sin that water has against flaming fire. Let the Christian man only have the sense to give alms with sufficient generosity, and the day will come when he shall find that, through God's grace, he has ceased to sin, and is sorry for his sins committed, and is saying humbly the magic word, "*Peccavi*—I have sinned," and hears the answer: "The Lord hath taken away thy sin."

If you want to hear this doctrine still more

* Dan. iv. † Luke xi. ‡ Ecclus xxix. § Ecclus iii.

clearly taught, turn, I pray you, to the words which old Tobias, under God's inspiration, uttered as his dying counsel to his dear son: "Almsdeeds deliver from all sin and from death, and will not suffer the soul to go into darkness."* What word can be more forcible? "Will not suffer the soul to go into darkness." Are we to gather from all these sentences that a man may wallow in sin and still purchase mercy through almsgiving? No, brethren. God forbid! But we have this most clear and sure promise that he who does mercy shall find mercy, that our Lord will keep His word: "What you did to My little ones, I will take as done to Myself;" and that the man who does mercy will find a grace given to him, before it be too late, to repent of his sins, to be truly sorry for them, to confess them, to obtain pardon for them—a pardon that shall be ratified in heaven. "Almsdeeds will not suffer the soul to go into darkness."

Thank God, my dear brethren, Mr Middelton, who has been called away to give an account of his stewardship, was not one of those who, to use the phrase of holy Job, "eat their morsel alone." I think he might truly say, with that good man, mercy and generosity and kindness of heart "grew up with me." To open his hand and share what he possessed with those around him was a duty to which he never needed to be urged. And this sacred altar, and this chapel, and the little church and school, helped so liberally for the use of poor Catholics in and about Ilkley, remain to bear witness that as through God's mercy he cherished for himself the ancient faith, and valued and appreciated for himself the holy sacraments instituted by our Lord, so he had a true zeal to

* Tob. iv.

secure for his poorer neighbours those graces and blessings which he coveted for himself.

My brethren, I have before my mind the words with which St James concluded his Epistle: "If any of you err from the truth and one convert him, he must know that he who causeth a sinner to he converted from the error of his way shall save his soul from death and cover a multitude of sins";* and also the kindred words of the Prophet Daniel: "They that instruct many to justice shall shine as stars for all eternity."† Next to the apostle that toils and teaches, who helps most to convert sinners from the error of their way and to instruct others into justice? Is it not he who, by his liberal almsgiving, very cordially provides for the poor all those spiritual helps and graces that come from the altar and from the preaching of Christ's Gospel and the training of Christ's little ones?

These thoughts, my brethren, I have wished to set before you in order to carry out St Paul's desire that you may not be ignorant concerning them that are asleep, as others are who have no hope; and from what I have said you will see that not only for our own sakes should we have right notions concerning the state of the departed —as then we know better how to prepare ourselves for what is coming—but for their sakes also it is most necessary that we be not ignorant respecting them. It is the fashion among many to say that dogma is of no consequence; but, my brethren, if there is a purgatory, as most certainly there is, and if we can help the holy departed by our prayers, if we say truly in the creed, there is a communion of saints, that is, an intercourse between Christians on earth and the holy dead,

* Jas v. † Dan. xii.

see what a cruel wrong Satan does to those children of God in purgatory by persuading men on earth that all is well with them, that they need no help, that we can safely forget them, and go on with our buying and selling, and our politics and our trivialities. The doctrine of purgatory, and the knowledge that we can help our dear ones after death, is a wonderfully strong link between the living and the dead. It helps much to break down the barrier of separation, to bridge over the chaos that seems to lie between us here and our brethren gone from us. Greatly, therefore, does our merciful God desire, greatly do the holy dead desire, that we should all take care not to be ignorant concerning them that sleep, but more and more persuade ourselves of the truth of that revealed word: "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins."

R. I. P.

Kind reader, pray for his soul and the souls of all the Faithful departed.

XI--Robert Caddell

(Of Harbourston)

A Discourse over his Remains, in the Oratory of the Sacred Heart, Bournemouth, November 17, 1887

I fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ.—Coloss. i, 24.

If I may use a familiar and homely phrase, dear brethren, I am here to-day beside this coffin "for auld lang syne." For one half century is gone by, and eight years of another, since I first saw Robert Caddell as a scholar in Stonyhurst College. His school-days were drawing to a close when I was beginning my course. The year was one written in bright letters in the annals of the Church in this country, the well-remembered year of Catholic Emancipation. At the following midsummer we ceased to live under the same roof; our paths diverged, and for almost fifty years I lost sight of him. Being the only son of affluent and indulgent parents, he led the easy life of a young gentleman; was always ready to take a part in sports and domestic amusements; was a genial and popular companion, and travelled abroad to see the world, as we say. In fine, I might address to you, my dear departed friend, the word that our Lord spoke so kindly to His chosen Apostle, His future Vicar: "When thou wast a young man, thou didst gird thyself and walk where thou wouldst."* Indeed, all through his life, being

* John xxi.

an unfettered bachelor, his taste and inclination led him to make excursions from place to place to study men and manners, and "the things that are done under the sun."*

It was not till about ten years ago that I again fell in with him; and since that time our intimacy has grown closer and more close: an intimacy which in this momentous hour of death fills me with consolation, for I think I may say with truth that this intimacy has been very much made up of a preparation for a happy death. Not a sad, morose, melancholy brooding over death, with a heart full of fear and trembling; for this would not have been compatible either with his natural irrepressible cheerfulness or with the Christian hope that was strong within him. His constant aim was in a practical and business-like way to set his house in order. His first care was, by regular and frequent and humble confessions and multiplied acts of contrition, to purify his soul from every stain of sin. God gave him in good measure the grace which moved the penitent Psalmist to cry out: "Wash me yet more, O Lord, from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." With this growing desire for sacramental absolution came a corresponding value for the Sacrifice of the Mass, for Benediction, and for Holy Communion. Singularly hardy in his habits, and a determined enemy of over-nursing, he considered it necessary, even when his strength was at times failing, to brave the weather in order to assist at Holy Mass; and he always had a special relish for High Mass and sermons. Besides his visits to the church, he had every morning, and at other times in the day, fixed hours and long hours for pray-

* Eccles. i.

ing in his room, to which he was very faithful. Indeed, he never seemed to mind how much time he gave to his morning devotions, or how late it was when he broke his fast.

Among other devotions the Rosary of our Blessed Lady was never forgotten. He was glad to say it with his household when he could, or with some member of his family; but if not so, always by himself. In his early youth he had bound himself at the altar by a promise: "I will never say or do anything to dishonour the Mother of God." To that promise he was, I think, faithful through life; and at his death the scapular of our Lady was round his neck, and lies with him in his coffin as a pledge of protection from our Blessed Mother. From what I have been saying, you can see how the grace of God was with him in these years, preparing him for a better world.

Another most consoling reminiscence in my mind is the great share God gave him of the admirable grace which was given to Zacchæus, when the visit of our blessed Saviour brought salvation to his house. "Half of my goods," the penitent publican said, "I give to the poor; and if I have wronged any one, I give back fourfold."* Mr Caddell's alms during the time in which I have known him were continual and very ample; and in late years he would have every week some Masses offered which he wished might benefit not only himself and his relatives, to whom he was always strongly attached, but everyone also to whom he might ever have done any wrong in thought or word or deed. In fine, my dear brethren, the close of his life was blessed with all those graces which we so often see given

* Luke xix.

to those who are the children of a blessed Catholic marriage; the children of good pious parents, whose main anxiety it is to be able to say at death, "I have kept the faith, I have fought a good fight,"* and who, when their children are young, spare no pains to infuse into their tender minds, by means of a thoroughly religious education, those holy, Catholic first impressions which, like heavenly evergreens, live on during the summers and winters of this changing world, and in the hour of death prove the very best inheritance that their parents have left them. So much for the past story of my good and dear friend.

But I am not here to speak his panegyric. It would be cruel to waste too much time in commendations which cannot find their way down through the sward of the graveyard to give solace to him in his present necessities. I think that the fitting work of survivors when they stand about the death-bed, when the whisper is passed round, "He is dead!" is to follow at once their friend into the new world to which he is gone, and to fix this thought well in their minds, that if he needed help and consolation on his death-bed, his need may be a thousand times more sore at present. It is a very cheap and worthless kind of friendship, brethren, to say over the coffin, "Now he is at rest, thank God!" and then forget the dead. A much more holy and wholesome thought it is to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins. Better far to say: "In the midst of my days I will go down in spirit to the gates of purgatory." Better far to travel down to that house of mourning, to that furnace of humiliation where

* 2 Tim. iv.

the dross is purged away by fire till all the gold is purified.

I have said something of the life on earth of Robert Caddell. For his sake, and yours too, dear brethren, let me tell you something of what may be probably enough his present condition. For few, I believe, enter heaven without being detained in purgatory, and for many the time may be longer far than we imagine. I say, for your own sakes, too: for you do not forget the inspired word which the dead Christian speaks to us from his coffin: "Remember my judgement, for thine also shall be so: yesterday for me, today for thee." * For a little while then, brethren, before you scatter to your homes, let me tell you something of what the condition of a departed soul may be now, and what yours may be tomorrow.

After death, as you know, and as St Paul tells us, comes the judgement. After the judgement most commonly, through God's infinite mercy, comes purgatory. For purgatory is an invention of God's fatherly compassion.

Because He is our Father and we are His children, and because His own Divine Son has paid a great price for us, and made a great atonement for our sins, and because, moreover, He sees how we are duped and tricked and deceived by the malice of Satan—who hates us simply because we are the children and the image of our God, and because he knows that Christ our Lord did so love us as to deliver Himself up for us—on this account, I say, our heavenly Father has a boundless pity for us; and seeing our foolishness, how easily we sin, how loth we are to do penance for our sins, His

* Eccles. xxxviii.

fatherly love set in motion His infinite wisdom and devised this place of purgatory, where we shall sin no more, but can do the penance that our sloth would not do on earth. Praise be to His infinite charity!

From the judgement-seat, then, like lightning, the Christian soul arrives at the gate of purgatory, and arrives there in eager haste, not unwillingly, not through coercion. For at the judgement-seat the soul departed has seen for one moment the Lord Himself in His loveliness; and the sight of Him has instantly, so theologians teach us, produced a contrition so intense, so full of strong love, that every sin not forgiven on earth, even the smallest, is at once cancelled. Still, however, God's goodness sees that it is wise and right that the debt due to His divine justice be fully paid; and so the soul, now sanctified ineffably, now made one of God's most holy children, one of His blessed saints, is eager beyond all thought to find some place where it can make compensation and pay the last farthing of the debt that is due. It would be agony utterly unendurable to enter God's home in heaven till this is done. On this account this holy child of God needed no urging, no constraint, no guard to lead him to the gates of purgatory. He sees the work to be done, and his heart is ready, most ready.

What is the work to be done, brethren? If we were there at the gates of the prison-house he would tell us what his work is to be. In the words of my text, he would say with St Paul: "I must now fill up what is wanting of the sufferings of Christ." *

For, as you know, brethren, our Lord, out of

* Coloss. i.

His charity for us, wishes each of us to win his own eternal glory; wishes each of us to have throughout eternity the glory of having earned his own throne; and, therefore, though His redemption was plentiful, yet He has purposely left a little undone; and that little each of us must do. I have to fill up, the departed one says, what is wanting to the sufferings of Christ. I ought, while on earth, to have taken up my cross and followed my crucified Lord more closely. What I left undone on earth I must do now in purgatory. "I must go through my passion here: purgatory is my Gethsemani and my Calvary."

Well, dear brethren, you remember that the evangelist telis us that when our Lord went to Gethsemani to begin His Passion "it was night." See now, as the departed one enters purgatory, how true, how terribly true, this word is: "It is night." Into a thick darkness he is gone; and as soon as he finds his appointed place he is at once prostrate as our Lord was before the face of God, which is hidden and turned away; and there he lies, saying again and again as our Saviour said in His agony: "My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from me: but still not my will but Thine be done." Not once, not twice, not seven times, nor seventy times seven times, does this sigh, this yearning burst from that holy soul. Many and many times, as we know, our Saviour repeated that self-same word. Alas! who can count how often it is repeated by the holy soul in purgatory! For it is night—a long, unbroken changeless night. The night in the Garden hastened on through its watches. No miracle was wrought to stay the course of the moon, to delay the coming of the

dawn. "Do it quickly," the Lord had said, and all was done quickly; but here in purgatory the night is a changeless night that does not travel onwards. There is not in the firmament any star to tell how the night goes; there is no hour-glass, no timepiece to help a conjecture, to give some sign when the sufferer's midnight is come; when the twilight and the first streak of dawn may be hoped for. It is night; and remember what our Blessed Saviour reveals to us concerning His own condition, that He was overwhelmed with weary tediousness; that He was sad and full of fear, and so sorrowful that by rights He ought to have died: His crushed Heart ought to have broken as He lay upon the earth, and never ought He to have risen from thence. If this be so, what shall we believe to be the condition of the holy soul in purgatory? For can we forget the words which our Saviour spoke as He drew near to Calvary: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but weep over yourselves and your children; for if in the green wood these things be done, what shall be done in the dry?"* The Agony in the Garden soon passed, and the Good Friday dawned; but will the night in purgatory soon come to an end? Alas! there the work of purgation goes on as slowly as if time had no value at all. Here on this earth we are in a hurry because life is short; but in purgatory no note at all is taken of time. You may remember, brethren, the warning which the Holy Ghost gives us in Ecclesiasticus: "Say not I have sinned, and what harm hath befallen me; for the Most High *is a patient rewarder*."† God does not suddenly strike us here on earth: He can wait. The eternal God—what cause has

* Luke xxiii. †Ecclus v, 4.

He for hurry or for haste? In purgatory nothing can happen to cause hurry. There is no sunset near before which my work must be accomplished. There is no daybreak at hand which must find me ready with my task ended. There is no visitor expected who has a right to find my debt all settled. There is no train starting heavenwards which I have to catch. It is night: and from the earth I have brought with me, as St John tells us, all my works—a vast store has followed me out of this world of works and words and thoughts—and they have all to be purged from dross in the fire of humiliation. A vast debt remains unpaid for the sins, the offences, the negligences of a long life, many of which were indeed in confession absolved, so that the guilt is gone never to return; but oftentimes a commutation was appointed. For grievous sin, in place of eternal punishment, a term—and often a long term—of penal servitude is to be gone through, either in this world or in purgatory. If we are wise let it be in this world, where everything can be done so quickly; where everything is so arranged by our compassionate Father that the poor sinner can quickly, if he please, get rid of sin and the consequences of sin. But in purgatory the vast heap of debt stands apparently untouched, and the poor suffering soul can see no visible diminution; so slow, so slow, so intolerably slow, is the work of atonement in this world that is to come. Our Lord was in earnest when He said: "Weep not over Me, but weep over yourselves and over your children; for if in the green wood these things be done, what shall be done in the dry?"

I have said that it is a changeless night in purgatory: but one change there is, for as our

Lord broke off His prayer of agony sometimes to go and see how it fared with His disciples, so does the holy soul in purgatory—now a saint, now a sinless child of God, now full of God's charity—from time to time travel back in thought to those "I left behind in my father's house," saying (oh, with how much intensity!): "If I might warn them not to come into this place of torment." And then, too, bursts from the agonized sufferer a cry of expostulation: "Oh! my friend, my familiar, thou of one mind with me, thou that didst eat the sweet morsel with me, and we walked with consent in the house of God,* couldst thou not watch one hour with me? Is it possible that out of sight I am out of mind? Oh! take pity on me, take pity on me, you at least my friends, because the hand of the Lord hath touched me."† And then with our Lord the holy soul goes back to its agony; and, as the agony goes on, the prayer too goes on: "My Father, not as I will but as Thou."

And even that sweat of blood which was poured out of the crushed Heart of our Lord does not tell us all the reality of the agonies in purgatory. For we have ever to fall back on His own word: "If in the green wood these things be done, what shall be done in the dry?" It is only when aided by the grace of the Holy Ghost in prayer that we can in some degree realize the accents and tones of the holy soul when sighing out his prayer: "My Father, not as I will but as Thou." Otherwise our hearts can picture nothing like the scene in purgatory.

And yet, though the agony is so immense—that is, so unmeasured and immeasurable—and though the departed one knows quite well that

* Ps. liv. † Job xix.

friends on earth have an unlimited power of relieving, of shortening this most cruel distress, yet their strange neglect and all their apathy wakens no resentment at all in the sufferer. For in purgatory all is holiness; there are in purgatory souls more holy, more full of grace, than many already in heaven. The faithful one in purgatory is made like to Christ crucified; and as he lies crucified there on his calvary, and thinks of those who have on earth the power to console him in suffering, and do it not, his only revenge is to say: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they are doing. Do not lay, O Lord, this sin to their charge. They know not what I suffer. I indeed here receive the just reward of my deeds, and it is not from malice they forget me. Forgive them, Father; they know not what they do."

I have said, dear brethren, once and again, that it is dark night in purgatory; but there are times and passing seasons when the dense darkness is lighted for awhile with a gleam of consolation unspeakable. It is when the charity of survivors on earth is active; when the holy Sacrifice is doing its mighty work for those who sleep in death. Then the Son of God, who has been desiring with great desire for this opportunity, says to His holy Mother: "Mother, look down on thy suffering child, on My holy one in his prison." Then the full power of her maternal pleading is put forth. She who said at Cana, "They have no wine," knows the word to be said for the holy soul; and her Divine Son again answers: "Though the due hour is not yet come, yet at thy voice the prisoner in his prison shall leap for joy." And on a sudden the penitent soul sees in the gleaming light how his huge

debt has, by the charity of the faithful on earth, been wonderfully diminished, and is ineffably consoled.

But the bright moment passes, and all is night again; and the heavy darkness becomes again oppressive, so oppressive that in his agony the meek mourner sighs out with Jesus on the Cross: "My God, my God, why hast Thou abandoned me? And you, my friends, my friends, why have you abandoned me?" You know, brethren, with what feeling pious souls on earth meditate on this desolation of our Saviour on the Cross; and you know how His followers find themselves bowed down and crushed and forlorn when God wills them to taste His bitter cup of desolation. Well, let us not forget our Saviour's words: "If they do these things here in the green wood, what shall be done in the dry?" In three hours our Lord's desolation ended. Before the sunset His Soul and His Body were in peace. But how many hours, how many days, how many weeks, months, years, shall go by on earth before this black night in purgatory shall pass away? It rests with us to shorten it or prolong it. As Pilate said to our Lord: "Do not You speak to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You and power to release You"?* So may we well say to the holy souls: "Do you not speak to me, nor cry to me? Have I not power to crucify you, and power to release you?" Alas! too well they know it. But they do cry to us—they are not silent—they do not forget. It is we who forget, and heed not the cry.

And here a question occurs which is discussed by theologians—whether the devils have any

* John xix.

power to afflict or torment the holy souls in purgatory; and opinions are divided. It may be that in purgatory, as in heaven, there are many mansions, many different degrees and classes of suffering; for here on earth undoubtedly there is great difference between one sinner and another, one penitent and another. If then there are in purgatory some holy souls subjected to the cruelty of Satan and his fallen angels, we may form to ourselves some faint idea of their condition by setting before our minds our Blessed Saviour, as He was in the hours between the cock-crow and the dawn, seated on the bench in the midst of the servants—who acted under Satan's inspiration—blindfolded and bound with cords, while they spit on Him and tear His hair, and give Him heavy blows with their fists, and strike His face with their hands, and pour out a torrent of mocking blasphemies. Alas, how easy it would be for Satan and his angels to find out cruel insults wherewith to afflict the penitent child of heaven! "Where is your hope? Where is your plentiful redemption of which you heard on earth? Where is the compassionate Heart of Jesus that said, 'Come to Me when burdened'? Where is your Mother Mary? How comes it that you are so completely forgotten by the Christians, who always love one another so much?" For if they do these things to Jesus, what shall be done to the poor sinner during his passion?

But then there will be, no doubt, another mansion, where at last the pains are lessened. Fire has done its work; the debt due for the most heinous sins of life is paid; but still remains unrepaid that habitual disrelish for God which prevails so much even among the good and the

pious ; that slothful state of mind which makes us dread prayer, shrink from being alone with God, and inclines us to say, when holy retirement, when conversation with our Lord Jesus is proposed to us, "Oh, not this Man, but Barabbas ! Not Jesus Christ; but rather conversation with any chance passer-by, with any earthly companion, with any book filled with the worthless thoughts of the mind of a man : no, not this Man, but Barabbas ! " Now, what is the suitable reparation for this nausea for God, this disinclination for all His loveliness ? You find it in that mansion where the soul, now relieved from the devouring fire, pines away with hunger and with thirst for God, and is for ever sighing out the word : "I thirst, I thirst ! " Ample reparation is now made to God's loveliness for all that lifelong apathy and disrelish. And if you wish to try to realize in some faint way what this burning thirst inflicts in purgatory, remember our Lord's condition on the Cross—after His loss of blood in the garden, at the pillar, and on Calvary —and then once more think on His own warning word : "If in the green wood these things be done, what shall be done in the dry ? "

At last, however, thanks to the earnest charity of friends on earth, the thick night is changed into a twilight of nearer hope, and the huge oppressive load of debt has dwindled down to a little ; and the holy soul finds itself saying wistfully that sacred word : *Consummatum est :* my work in purgatory is well-nigh done—within a little, within a little—but, alas ! alas ! that little seems to require years and years for its completion, so slow is the process of purification in purgatory. But lo ! the good angel, who is watching at the gate for his companion, has put it into the mind of those on earth to make a last

supreme effort; and on a sudden, most unexpectedly, before all hope, with a voice full of the sweetness of heavenly charity, the long expecting angel whispers: "Yes; *consummatum est*—all is over. Alleluia!" And the two bright spirits together—in the twinkling of an eye, swift as the lightning flash—have soared to heaven, and the holy soul is gathered to the Divine Heart of our Lord, saying: "My God, my Lord, my Saviour, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

Now there is great gladness among the blessed; for this long-lost child is found again, and the dead one is come to life; and at once this new-comer into heaven begins, with all the intensity of heavenly gratitude and charity, to plead for those, whether they be still on earth or now in purgatory, who befriended him in his hour of need, saying with resistless earnestness: "O Lord, make haste to help them! What can I give them back for what they gave to me? Make haste, O Lord, make haste, and do not delay, that they may be with me in Paradise."

And now, brethren, we have to consign the mortal remains to the earth; and may our Lord in His goodness give to us who survive a good share of that grace which prepared Robert Caddell for a happy death; and a grace that shall often incline us to go down in spirit to the house of mourning, there to console and refresh by our prayers and works of mercy the holy souls in prison, and with all our hearts to cry out: "O Lord, make haste to help them. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. Amen."

R. I. P.

Kind reader, pray for his soul and the souls of all the Faithful departed.

XII--Eliza Mary Katharine Devas

Child of Mary

(Wife of Charles S. Devas, Esq.)

A Discourse over her Remains, in the Church of St Mary Magdalen, Mortlake, June 11, 1899

Sinite parvulos, et noli prohibere venire ad me—Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come to Me.—MATT. xix, 14.

YES, dear brethren, I think that if to-day our Blessed Lord were still here, beside this coffin, and visible among us, He would say to us: "Suffer [her] little children to come to Me. Do not hinder them. Nay, call them and bring them to Me, that I may lay My hands on each of them, and bless them all with that special blessing which I have in My Heart for the little ones whom I Myself have rendered motherless. For it is I Myself who have done it. This work is all Mine. And what I have done to their mother concerns most nearly of all these nine little ones bereaved. A husband, no doubt, and others more advanced in years, understand better the value of what I take from them; but it is in reality the unconscious little child who ought to be the chief mourner. He is the main sufferer by the death of his young mother. He has best right to come to Me with his complaint. Suffer, then, her little children to come to Me, and do not forbid them. As I said of old by My prophet Isaias, so I say now: 'Put Me in remembrance,'

My little ones, and 'let us plead together.'* For it was I that spoke, and the work was done; it was I who commanded, and the havoc was wrought in her mortal body; and without My sanction and behest not one hair of her head could be taken from its place or fall to the ground. When, therefore, I spoke that word it was with full foreknowledge of all the consequences to come. To use your human language, it was after an eternal premeditation of My loving Heart that I called her away, having compassion on her. *Charitate perpetua dilexi te, et attraxi te miserans tui.*† The mother and the child, they are both Mine; and My Heart, with an everlasting love, had studied them both before at last I sent My angel to whisper into her soul the summons: 'Come! give an account of thy stewardship, for now thou canst be steward no longer';‡ before the cry rose upon her listening heart in the middle of the night: 'Behold, the Bridegroom cometh: go forth to meet Him.'§ Then at last did I give the signal to the angel of death to do his office, and spoke the necessary word: She 'shall go into the house of her eternity, and the mourners shall go round about the street.' Let 'the silver cord' of life be broken, let 'the golden fillet' of youth and health and gracefulness shrink back; let 'the pitcher' that holds the life-blood 'be crushed at the fountain,' and the wheel of her nativity 'be broken at the cistern.' Let 'the dust return to its earth, and the spirit come home to God who gave it.'‖ This work then is all Mine. But am I not Myself the Child of a Mother? Have I not learned in Bethlehem, in Nazareth, on Mount

* Isa. xliii. † Jer. xxxi. ‡ Luke xvi.
§ Matt. xxv. ‖ Eccles. xii.

Calvary, how mother and child are two in one, and that He who strikes the mother strikes the child? Therefore suffer the little children to come to Me, and do not hinder them, that I may explain to them some part at least of My design."

Well, then, brethren, if these nine motherless little ones, encouraged by the gentle tenderness of our Saviour, gather round Him, and with their eyes fixed on His, say to Him, in the fearlessness of their innocent hearts: "Dear Lord, good Master, why hast Thou done thus to us?" will He be angry? will He arraign them for irreverence? Does He not well remember that it was the sweet voice of His own Mother that first uttered this remonstrance to Him, for our teaching and our comfort? Was there any shadow of irreverence on her lips or in her soul when her bleeding heart and her faltering tongue said to Him: "My Son, wherefore hast Thou done so to us?"* O good God, our God, our Father, our Brother, our Saviour, Thou whose delight it is to be with the sons of men, "hearing them and asking them questions,"† how infinitely contented Thou art when we come round Thee in humility, and with the filial confidence of children ask of Thee to tell us something of Thy secret designs, and to show us how Thy thoughts are not as our thoughts, and how, "as the heavens are exalted above the earth," so Thy ways are exalted above ours!‡

"It was a labour in my sight," the psalmist writes, "and I studied that I might know this thing," why we see at times the sinner and the wicked prospering and abounding and not scourged with the stripes of other men, while

* Luke ii. † Luke ii. ‡ Isa. lv.

we hear the innocent making their lament: "In vain then have I justified my heart and washed my hands among the innocent, for I have been scourged all the day, and my chastisement hath begun in the mornings." But forthwith he adds that this perplexity only lasted till "I go into the sanctuary of God, and understand concerning their last ends": for there I see at once how what we call life here is but "the dream of them that awake." * "Do not, therefore, hinder them; suffer My little ones to come to Me, and plead with Me. I can give them wisdom to understand more than aged men. † I can stir up the faith and charity of baptism which is in their souls, and give them such reasons, and speak such words to their innocent hearts as will content them and give them that 'peace which the world cannot give,' and draw hymns of praise from the mouths and the hearts of the little ones."

"And first of all, as they look up in My face and ask their question: 'Dear Lord, why hast Thou done thus to us?' I begin by saying to them here beside the coffin what I said on the eve of My own death in the supper-room to My warm-hearted and perplexed apostle: 'What I do you know not now, but you shall know hereafter.' ‡ 'There is nothing,' My little ones, 'covered' that at the hour appointed 'shall not be revealed, nothing hid that shall not be made known.' § If not before that day, at least when all is consummated in this world and I come with My angels to judge, all shall be made clear, for if I come to judge I shall also come to be Myself judged, for all My designs and all My secret ways shall then be made manifest, and

* Ps. lxxii. † Ps. cxviii. ‡ John xiii.
§ Matt. x.

My psalmist has already made known the result, that I shall be justified in all My words and works, and when I am judged I shall overcome. * When in that hour all My thoughts and designs, all My mercy and My love are made known, the verdict of all My elect will be given in one anthem, loud and full, sweet and ineffably becoming: 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and divinity, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and benediction.'" †

Then shall we know, dear brethren, why on Thursday last, on the octave of the Ascension, on the very last day when the two hundred Masses of the third Novena had been offered up, our Blessed Saviour, instead of hearing the cry of so many hearts who wished this necessary mother of nine little ones to be left here, gave charge to His angel to say the final word which holy Church re-echoed in this world: "Go forth, Christian soul." And then before the night closed in of that last day of our great Novena, we were whispering to each other: "All is over: she is dead." All is over; yes, for her here below in this world. In the sick-room, all the loving work of nursing is ended. All is so thoroughly over, that not even the appalling uproar and crashes of the thunder which rendered that night noticeable could cause one slight quiver in those calm features, or give back one tinge of colour to those pale cheeks. All is over. The still night will bring no sleep to her; to-morrow's sunrise shall not waken her. The tidings of the desolating flood in the far West have reached London; the frivolous news from the racecourse hard by is flying from street to

* Ps. l. † Apoc. v.

street; far more precious words may come in the letters from her little ones. But all is over. All words have lost their power. Good news, bad news—one is as powerless as the other to produce any alteration in the fixed repose of that Christian sleep. All is over. She is dead; and those who have lived with her, those who by their companionship and a constant interchange of thoughts have helped to educate her, helped her to be what she was, bow down their heads and in their secret hearts say her own favourite prayer: "May the most holy, and most just, and most lovable will of God be done."

Still, it is indeed most true, dear Lord, that what Thou dost we know not now, for to us she seemed a great necessity to her home. Each of her nine little ones seemed to our poor wisdom a strong reason, a very stong reason, why she should remain, with her bright, joyous spirit, her strong Catholic faith, her good sense, her motherly tact, her strict conscientious rectitude, her self-sacrifice, her accurate truthfulness, her innocent playfulness, her childlike simplicity, her open candour that dreaded not the light, to bring up her young family in innocence like her own. But happily all those to whom she belonged had learned to believe, as she did, with unwavering faith that Thy judgements, O Lord, are wiser and more merciful and more loving than ours; and therefore the sanctity of the sacred bed of death was not desecrated by one profane word of repining, such as comes from hearts that are "ignorant concerning them that sleep,"* and have no Christian hope. The thoughts and words of those who had watched with bleeding hearts that sanctified death-bed

* 1 Thess. iv.

were kindled with her own feelings, and their response was that of holy Job: "The Lord gave [her], the Lord hath taken [her] away, blessed be the name of the Lord; as it hath pleased the Lord, so is it done,"* and the wise work of praying for the dead began at once. Before her eyes were closed the holy rosary was in every hand. Soon after, while the sharp wound is still quite fresh and smarting most sorely, lest any unworthy repining should intrude, those who were the most bereaved make haste to revisit the deceased corpse and say such words as they knew the departed one would wish for if her voice could be heard: *Magnificat anima mea*—"My soul doth magnify the Lord"; *Te Deum laudamus*—"We praise Thee, O God, and acknowledge Thee to be the Lord"; *Sume et suscipe Domine*—"Take, O Lord, in this time of trial my memory, that it may not harbour any thought that displeases Thee; take my understanding, that my views and judgements may be like to Thine; take all my will, that with my whole heart I may say, 'Not my will, but Thine be done.'" May her thought be mine, and nothing else: "May the most just and most holy will of God be done!"

But I am straying away. One day all these things shall be explained to us fully. Nothing shall remain a mystery. Meanwhile our Blessed Lord is saying still: "Suffer her little children to come unto Me; let them speak with Me, that I may tell them even now some little at least of My secrets." Well then, dear Lord, emboldened by the loving compassion of Your heart, which speaks to them through Your sacred eyes, they put their question reverently and lovingly:

* Job i.

"Good Lord, dear Jesus, why have you done thus to us? Why have you taken our mother away? And, first of all, had we behaved badly to her, or had we done any sin that deserved this severe punishment?" "No, dear children," our Lord would answer lovingly. "Fear not, it is not any fault of yours that moved Me to call her away from you. You loved her and were good to her, and she loved you and was good to you." For indeed, dear brethren, it was singularly pleasant to hear her on her death-bed pray morning and evening for each one of those little ones deservedly beloved, and speak of them with motherly happiness, and call to mind how one day, when she returned home after an absence, they all surrounded her, and as they led her away to her room one of the youngest ones said to her, "Mother, are we not like little angels round you?" and her heart responded, "It is true, dear Lord. Out of the mouths of innocent children comes Thy truth." Nor was the sacred Heart of our Lord displeased, I think, when from time to time, in spite of her habitual craving that death might come quickly, the remembrance of her nine children would draw from her heart a most earnest cry that, if God so willed, she might live to take care of them. Fear not therefore, little ones, you gave her no sorrow. It is not to punish you that our Lord has called her home.

But they have not done. "If then, dear Lord," they go on, "if it is no sin of ours that has moved you to take her from us, surely it could not be any sin of hers—could it?—that made you angry and obliged you to take her from us. For she was good, was she not?" "No, dear children," our loving Lord would answer, "neither was there any sin of hers that

caused Me to take her from this world. Men indeed do think that whenever I send sorrow I am chastising. They forget that I and My Blessed Mother, because we were the most innocent, drank most deeply of the chalice of suffering. Even My apostles, when they saw the man blind from birth, at once judged that either he or his parents must have deserved the chastisement by some sin, but I assured them that neither he nor his parents had sinned, that the blindness was not sent as a chastisement, but only that the power and mercy of God might be made manifest. Your mother was one of the blessed ones 'who have carried the yoke from their youth,' and through life she strove to serve Me faithfully and to the end she never ceased to be one of My little ones. No sin of hers called to heaven for heavy chastisement."

And here, dear brethren, I must break in with a kind of parenthesis to add testimony to this word of our Lord, though I indeed was not a witness of her life, but only of her death. My acquaintance with this good mother, this good wife, this good daughter, this good sister, was but short. About five months have passed away since I met her for the first time, and I well remember how at our first meeting she said to me with a cheerful smile on her face: "I have come to ask you if you will help me to prepare for death. And in fact at once her preparation began in good earnest, and, if I may so speak, in a most practical and businesslike way. As I have said, then, I am only the witness of her death, not of her life; but it has often been said, as you know, brethren—and, I think, most truly—that as we live so we die. In the Passion of our Lord we see how the whole history of His

future struggling Church is compressed into those twenty-four hours. The Pilates and the Herods of all ages, the weak friends and bitter enemies, the false treacherous priests and the servile rabble who are at work now as in every age gone by, are all represented there. So is it with us. In the last death-scene we can oftentimes read the whole story of a life. Again and again I noticed with singular consolation, while I stood by the death-bed, how throughout the ups and downs of a cruel sickness—that is, in the bright moments when there was a lull and a little respite, as well as in those hours of extreme exhaustion when weakness of body and the strong remedies that were necessary robbed her in part of the habitual vigour of her mind—the habits and the Christian virtues, acquired in years gone by, always maintained their sway.

She asked me, as I have said, at the very outset of her sickness, to help her to prepare for death, and as she perceived from time to time that I had caught by contagion from those around her the desire that if possible she might live, she often pointedly repeated her important question, "Will you not prepare me for death?" And of course, much as I desired to see her come back, as Holy Church prays, to her former duties, I felt that my proper task was to second her own pious desire and help her in the work of preparation for death. Therefore I read to her at once, in the beginning of her illness, the short account of our Lord's immediate preparation for death given by His beloved disciple, and begged her to notice each detail.

1. "Knowing that His hour was come," the inspired apostle writes;* "therefore," I said to

* John xiii.

her, "one grace to desire is that we be under no delusion when death is near, that we may have no false friends around us who are afraid to tell us that our hour is come."

2. Then, in the next place, our Saviour, St John tells us, knew "that He should pass out of this world to His Father," that "He came from God and goeth to God." And so, happy, thrice happy and thoroughly well prepared shall we be if we can have in our souls this hopeful conception of death: I am going home to my Father. I came from God and am going back to God.

3. After this we read in St John that our Saviour Jesus knew that the devil had put it into the heart of Judas to betray Him. Now, if we find out that some false friend is betraying us, the news might easily bring great disturbance, so that we should no longer be able to give our minds to the holy work of preparation. The meek spirit, therefore, of our Lord's Sacred Heart which can forgive wrongs is another necessary part of preparation for a holy death.

4. Then the Evangelist goes on to tell us how our Lord girded Himself with a towel, and washed the feet of His disciples. In this He has given us an example that we may all know that acts of humiliation are a fitting preparation for death.

5. Lastly, the beloved disciple adds the golden words: "Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end."

In these words we have two main rules to be most diligently observed if we hope to die the death of the just: the first, that charity and love is the one great and infallible preparation for a happy death; the second, that he who wishes to love on his death-bed must have loved in life.

"Having loved, He loved to the end." He who has not loved, will not begin at death to love. We cannot in the anguish of the death-bed begin to learn a new language or a new science. We must die as we have lived, and we must live as we would die.

Well then, dear brethren, I think I am safe in saying that all these five graces were given in good measure to this good mother on her death-bed.

1. For, first, she was certainly under no delusion about her state. Early last January the secret was told to her that medical skill could not master her malignant disease, that suffering and death were close at hand. How did she receive the news? I will cite a few words from a letter written to me yesterday by one who knew her from childhood most intimately, as a watchful elder sister was sure to do. "She was always most conscientious and earnest over what she had to do. If there was a thing that she ought to do, it was sure to be done, and done as well as she knew how." As soon, then, as she became aware of her condition, she went at once in haste to tell her secret to this sister, who was consecrated in religious life, and to secure the help of her prayers, and then set to work to learn how to die well; and though tears flowed from her eyes at the thought that she must be taken away from her husband and her children, her father and her mother, her sisters and her brother, all most dear to her, and though she shrank also very much from the thought of all the trouble her sickness and her death would bring to her husband and her aged parents and her family, yet there was in her soul a good measure of the spirit of Christian martyrdom, and she gave

sincere and earnest thanks to God for choosing her for so large a share of His bitter chalice, and with steady fortitude she set herself to her work of preparation. Throughout that interview, her sister writes, which lasted some hours, there were no signs of weakness, and, as I have already mentioned, amid all the changes of her sickness, the rising and the depression of hopes of recovery, again and again she urged her question: "Will you not prepare me for death?" She knew then that her hour was come.

2. Then secondly, brethren, with regard to the next word, "I am going to God," she had firmly fixed in her soul that bright and hopeful conception of death which Christ from His cross has bequeathed to His Church. For He has made the death-bed new, as well as all else. "Sin," St Paul says, "is the sting of death."* But they who have borne, as she did, the yoke from their youth, and walked unstained in the way,† they can say fearlessly in their hearts: "O death, where is thy victory, where is thy sting?" So then not only did she look upon death as a going home to her Father, but her hope was to go home without a long delay in purgatory, and she was not afraid to avow this thought. The sister from whom I have already quoted writes of her that "as she grew up, her child-like simplicity never left her"; and it was indeed consoling and refreshing to hear her say, with a truly child-like simplicity and confidence, when I spoke to her of purgatory: "Why, I fancied that I should not have much purgatory." From what I have still to add, we shall, I think, see how well grounded this hope was.

3. For, thirdly, when I reminded her of the

* 1 Cor. xv. † Ps. cxviii.

next word, "Knowing that the devil had put it into the heart of Judas to betray Him," and spoke to her of our Lord's meek forgiveness of enemies, she said again with the same child-like simplicity, that she did not think she ever had an enemy. I can only add that if she had no enemy, most surely we all could see in her last days how many friends she had. When was a death-bed more encompassed by Christian care and tenderness? I believe I am not at all overstating when I say that during the five months of her preparation for death the Holy Sacrifice was offered for her at least six hundred times. If those Masses did not procure the prolongation of her exile here, as we desired, can we doubt but that they will most happily abbreviate her exile in purgatory? And, then, what a surprising outburst of fervent sympathy and prayer came during her illness from the hearts of many who had not even seen her, but only knew by hearsay how good a mother, how true a wife, how dutiful a daughter, how loving a sister she was. "Can we not join together and make some vow to God for her recovery?" wrote one who was thus united to her without seeing. "Will you not take me, my Lord, and leave her with her children?" was the constant and earnest prayer of another who believed in her without seeing. *Vox populi, vox Dei*, is the old proverb; and I think that we are very safe in saying that the verdict of those who live with us and know us here below will be the judgement of our Lord Jesus Christ after death. When the poor widows stood around the body of Dorcas showing St Peter the coats and garments which she had made for them, the Heart of our Lord went with the hearts of those widows. You remember too

the word which our Lord spake to the sinful woman: "Has no man condemned thee?" And on her answering, "No one, Lord," how He added that word of ineffable consolation: "Then neither will I condemn thee."* Is not this the very rule He will follow at the Judgement—the rule He has already followed in the Judgement of this faithful servant who was loved because she loved? When He asks: "Is there no one of all your friends and relatives to accuse you? no one that has anything against you?" surely her answer must be—for she was always truthful and simple and straightforward—"No one, I hope, my Lord," and thereupon He would again say with a contentment such as no heart here hath conceived: "Then neither have I anything to condemn in you."

The word of the people is the word of God. "Beloved of God, beloved of men," Ecclesiasticus wrote concerning one of our Lord's holy servants.

4. One reason then, in the next place, why this good hope was laid up in her heart was that like our Lord she had prepared herself for a holy death by humiliation. For first of all I do not think that any one heard her utter one repining word against the manifold humiliations of her fearful sickness. Then, moreover, our Lord in His tender mercy gave her a wonderful readiness to say again and again that word which is such sweet music to His Divine Heart: "*Peccavi*—I have sinned." From the time she laid herself down on her death-bed, during those many weeks of suffering, so long as she enjoyed the full use of her mind, she was never tired of begging absolution for her small faults either of the present time or of her past life. Three or

* John viii.

four times each week she renewed her contrition and said in her heart, *Amplius lava me, Domine*, and received again the coveted absolution. One morning, as her devoted servant was lighting her fire, the crackling of the paper affected her weak nerves as she lay dozing, and she uttered the words: "Oh, that paper!" Next day she humbly begged pardon of her servant: "I did not know it was you; and whoever it was, I ought not to have been impatient." A still more surprising proof was, I think, given of the delicacy of her conscience and her desire with Zacchæus to repay four-fold "if I have wronged any one," when one day as her good angel was helping her more and more to purify her soul, she remembered that in the summer gone by she had once heard one very dear to her say some joking word that might give some pain to a third person present. "The just man is the first to accuse himself," the Holy Ghost tells us,* and so her timid conscience began to fear that possibly she had participated in this slip of the tongue by not showing some pain or displeasure in her countenance. She waited for her opportunity when she could see her dear one, and then reminded her sweetly of the occasion, and told her own fears, and asked her to join with her in saying a Hail Mary for one who might have suffered wrong.

5. And so we come to the last point of her preparation.

"Having loved, she loved to the end." Her consecrated sister writes: "As quite a little child she had a wonderful feeling for others. If she saw any one looking sad, she would try to cheer him in little ways of her own, and it seemed her greatest pleasure to help any one."

* Prov. xviii.

So that she could have truly said with holy Job: "From my infancy mercy grew up with me: it came out with me from my mother's womb."* Her years as a wife and as a mother were like those of her childhood. Her children loved her most fondly because she loved them; her husband, her parents, her brothers and her sisters all loved her because she was so loving with them all. Her servants were happy around her, and clung to her because she was a good and loving mistress to them.

In her long and painful illness, her physician, her nurses, her servants, and all who waited on her never tired of their work, because she never tired of thinking kindly and gratefully of them. With great pleasure and fervour, every morning and every night, she prayed by name, not only for every member of her family living or dead, but for her doctor also, and her nurses and her servants, and all who were so kind to her, and all who were taking care of her little children in her place. "She loved to the end."

This parenthesis, dear brethren, I have put in, as I have said, to support our Blessed Lord's assurance to her little ones that it was not as a chastisement for any sin that He sent suffering and death to her.

Well, then, we must go back to where we were, to those little ones around our Lord. They are still pressing their question: "Dear Lord, why have You done thus to us? Why have You taken away our mother so young?"

He answers tenderly: "Are you sure she was so young, dear children? Mark what the Holy Spirit has written: 'Venerable old age is not that of hoary hairs, nor counted by the number

* Job xxix.

of years; but the understanding of a man is grey hairs, and a spotless life is old age.'* Had she not understanding and true Christian good sense? And had she not, through much fidelity and diligence, arrived at a very blameless and spotless life? Heed well, too, what follows, for in the words of the Holy Spirit you can find perchance a good and sufficient answer to your question: 'Her soul pleased God, therefore He hastened to bring her out of the midst of iniquities. She pleased God, and was beloved.' She was one of those little ones without guile† who please the Lord so much, therefore she 'was translated.' 'She was taken away lest wickedness should alter her understanding or deceit beguile her soul. The people see this and understand not, nor lay up such things in their heart, that the grace of God and His mercy is with His saints, and that He hath respect to His chosen ones.'"

His mercy is indeed with His saints. His special tenderness is with those whom He chooses out to drink largely of His chalice. If He calls them away apparently before their time, it is only because their cry to Him is: "O Lord, make haste to help me." He hears them, and makes haste to call them to the home of their eternity. "Her soul pleased God, therefore He hastened to bring her out of the midst of iniquities."

A very grave difficulty, however, arises out of this answer. She is well cared for, her children might say, but what becomes of us? To this rejoinder our Blessed Lord is not without an answer, one which may suffice for our present want till the day of the Lord comes to make all things manifest. "Do you not observe," He

* Wisd. iv. † See Appendix.

might say, "that when I call away any of My chosen ones from their family to follow Me in the consecrated state, and bid them forget their people and their father's house, I promise them even in this world a hundredfold for all they renounce? And of course, if fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, give their dear ones up willingly to Me, they too come under My promise, and have a claim to their hundredfold. Can I be unjust or ungenerous? Do I ever forget the promise or repent of it? If this be so, what shall happen when I call my chosen ones away from house and home, not to serve Me in a convent, but to live with Me in My own home in heaven as My bride? If the Christian family of survivors meet Me with trusting love, and say, as I said Myself in the Garden in My hour of Agony: 'If it be possible, O Lord, let this chalice pass from [us], but still not [our] will be done, but Thine,' shall that word be forgotten? 'Give,' I said, 'and it shall be given to you.'* 'The Lord hath sworn and shall not repent.'† If they give up their loved one to Me, shall they have no good return?"

Would it not, dear brethren, be strange beyond all belief if the Heart of our Lord, from whence comes out all fatherly and all motherly love, could take a mother from her little ones and then forget to make provision for them?

Surely, dear brethren, when a prudent confessor is asked the question, "Am I called to a religious life?" if he finds that the consequence of going would be that clear, undoubted and important duties would be neglected, he answers firmly: "This is no call from God." When St Jane Frances, in her widowhood, left her chil-

* Luke vi. † Ps. cix.

dren to consecrate herself to God under the guidance of St Francis of Sales, had he seen that her going would be a stumbling-block to the salvation of her children, that she was neglecting a sacred duty to them, never, I think, would he have sanctioned her consecration. When God calls, His watchful Providence takes exceptional care, if allowed by men to do so, that His call shall work no mischief.

St Francis of Assisi knew this doctrine when he was cast off and disinherited by his father, and at once he turned to God and said: "Now I can say more truly than ever before, 'Our Father, who art in heaven.'" Who has a better right to look up to holy Mary and say, "Mother of God, be a mother to me," than the child whom our Lord has in His loving providence rendered motherless on earth?

And moreover, dear brethren, let us remember and not forget that a good Christian mother taken away from this world, when she arrives at the home of her eternity, and is brought into close contact with the burning charity of our Lord Jesus Christ, becomes, as St John tells us, like to Him.* Every Christian motherly instinct is intensified a thousand thousand times. Placed by the side of Christ and close to Him, her heart must, like those of other saints, become quite like to His Sacred Heart, and do precisely what our Lord's Heart is doing. Now, what is the Heart of Jesus doing? St Paul tells us. It is: "*Semper vivens ad interpellandum pro nobis*—Always living to intercede for us."† She therefore is with her God, always living to intercede for her little ones. "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord." Amen.

* John iii. † Heb. vii.

APPENDIX IV

1. HER consecrated sister, in her letter, speaks of the Christian courage and fortitude of this young mother. One notable example of her brave spirit was very unexpectedly elicited two or three weeks before her death. In the room below the one where she lay suffering, her aged and beloved mother died very suddenly, after a very short illness, and all feared the effect that this shock might have on her exhausted strength. Great was the surprise and emotion of her father when he entered the room very shortly after she had heard the painful news, to hear her greeting: "I give you joy, my father!" She had learned in life that the cross is a privilege and a blessing.

Her kind medical attendant wrote after her death these words: "The lessons that I have learned from Mrs Devas of patience and endurance under suffering have not been thrown away on me, and will not soon be forgotten. I have had the deepest wonder and admiration of her character all through the time of trial. . . . So far as I was able to help her, it has been a real pleasure." They are the more valuable and the more kind because he was not, as she was, a Roman Catholic.

Occasionally extreme weakness from the loss of blood brought on an agitation of her nerves, and she was inclined to cry. One day, when this happened in the presence of her confessor, she turned most imploringly to her sister, who was to her a second self, and said in touching ac-

cents: "Oh, do explain to him that when I am myself I am not at all like this—not in the least like this: quite different." She had schooled herself through life to the thought that any weakness was a fault.

2. Her sister also wrote, as I have already mentioned, that her childlike simplicity never left her. Her cheerfulness and playfulness, even in the midst of her severe suffering and discomfort, rendered it very hard at times to realize that she was the mother of nine children, and not still a child herself. Towards the beginning of her illness, she one day wished a messenger to be sent to the doctor to know whether it would hurt her to laugh as much as she was doing. Her family still knew her by no other name than the pet name given to her in her infancy by a sister then but two years old, who, not being able as yet to call her sister, gave her the name of little Sissy, and Sissy was her name to the end; and on her death-bed I heard her say: "I think she still looks on me only as her little sister."

Of her husband she one day said: "There are very few thoughts of mine that he does not know." On another occasion, speaking of one dear to her, she was assuring me enthusiastically that there never lived a better man. Knowing her fondness for St Joseph, I asked: "Do you include St Joseph when you say this?" She answered laughingly: "Well, at least there is no better man in this century."

3. Her sister also alludes to her thought for others. In her sickness she suffered continually from great thirst, and was glad to have some cooling drinks, but I remember seeing her one day hesitate before she drank what was offered. There was something that she wished to remember; but her extreme weakness interfered with

her thoughts. "There is something," she said, "that I ought to do." At last she remembered that she had not thanked the nurse who brought her the refreshment. Her habits had been formed to beg pardon for every fault, to be grateful for every kindness, and to have no enemies.

Another instance of her thought for others and forgetfulness of self was observed by her consecrated sister at their last meeting, when she went, as I have said, to give her the news of her fatal illness. While telling her sister with tears the verdict of the doctors, and trying to give her hope, it chanced that two of her own little children, who had just come back to the convent after the Christmas holidays, entered the room, and they too were crying, from a fit of homesickness. She at once dried her own tears, and set herself vigorously to console them, and went round the house and garden with them, heartily entering into all their thoughts and interests, and did not leave them till they were bright and happy. When the pain was more sharp than usual, she hoped it would help the Holy Souls, or win the conversion of some loved one.

4. I end with some of her motherly thoughts concerning her children. Her prayer, morning and evening, was that not one of them might ever fall into grievous sin, and that through life and at death they might always approach worthily and piously the two Sacraments of Confession and Communion. "I think," she said one day, "that I should like one of my children to marry. I should be very happy if the rest were consecrated."

R. I. P.

Kind reader, pray for her soul and the souls of all the Faithful departed.

XIII---Joseph Weld

A Discourse at his Funeral Service, in St Joseph's Church, Lymington, July 18, 1889.

It is appointed for all men once to die, and after this the judgement.—HEB. ix.

"AFTER this the judgement!" Yes, dear brethren. For we are taught, that in the moment when life on earth comes to a close—as soon as the soul at the bidding of its Creator goes out of the body—in that same hour it is judged. Come and "render an account of thy stewardship"* is the form in which the summons of death is brought to us. It is our consciousness that the judgement follows immediately upon death, without any interval for preparation, that renders death so solemn, so full of awe to a Christian. Our idea of death is quite different from the old pagan notion of those who had no hope. To them death was a separation for ever from all that they valued and loved—the good things of this world. When a relation or a friend died in those ancient days of darkness, to the survivors the departure seemed to be—so the Holy Ghost tells us—nothing but sheer misery, and "their going away as utter destruction."† But the teaching of our Blessed Lord and the grace and light that comes from Calvary has dispelled all these gloomy and despairing notions of death. We now know that death is not the end

* Luke xvii. † Wisd. ii.

of life, but in reality the beginning of true and everlasting life. Now we know that it is not a separation from all good things but a passage from a poor land of banishment into the land of all happiness, the home of our Father in heaven. It is the coming home of a long absent and anxiously expected child to a Father whose love has no limits, and to a most blessed family waiting eagerly to give a welcome that shall be eternal, hearty and joyous for ever to their brother, their companion, their comrade coming home safe from the storm of the terrible sea, from the dangers of the battlefield where all might have been lost.

We therefore could easily make up our minds to say good-bye to this world in order to pass to a better, we could easily make ourselves well content to die, were it not for this revelation which we cannot doubt and cannot forget: "After death the judgement." It is the coming judgement, so near at hand, that appals us. It is the judgement that engrosses all our attention when we dwell on that solemn question put by holy Job: "Man when he shall be dead and stripped and consumed, I pray you where is he?"* He is dead. He will be seen in his place no more. The soul has gone out from the body. He is dead; yes, and he is stripped also. He is become as poor as the veriest pauper. All his possessions have passed into the hands of other men. The lifeless body is stripped. A few poor grave clothes—nothing else—are now his portion. He is dead; he is stripped; and soon the body will be consumed. "Under thee," Isaias wrote prophetically, "the moth shall be strewn, and worms shall be thy covering."†

* Job xiv. † Isa. xiv.

In words still more stern holy Job preached the same great truth: "I am to be consumed in rottenness, and as a garment that is moth-eaten." * "I have said to rottenness, Thou art my father; to worms, my mother and my sister."† Dead, stripped and consumed! Yes, but all this is comparatively unimportant. For the one absorbing question is: "Oh, tell me, I pray you, tell me, to which side did the tree fall? Where is now the undying soul of him who has been called away?"

The answer, we all know, depends on the sentence passed at his judgement immediately after death last Saturday evening. And between us and the judgement-seat there is an abyss which no intellect or imagination of man can pass. Men claim in this century of ours to be very talented, and enlightened exceedingly. Probably those who come after us will look upon their century as the golden age of progress and civilization, and think little of ours. Be this, however, as it may, most sure and certain we all are that not all the talent and intellect of this nineteenth century, if combined together, could penetrate the thick veil that hangs between us here and the departed soul that has been judged. For good reasons, God keeps His own secret with regard to the dead; and what He has done to them we know not now, but we all shall know hereafter.

But still, though we have no revelation concerning the departed, we are allowed to make conjecture, and we are not without data to help us to form a very prudent and safe opinion respecting him who has been called away. For many things concerning the judgement after

* Job xiii. † Job xvii.

death have been revealed to us; and we are in a position to calculate and conjecture with much security how it has fared at the judgement with the soul of him whose body lies in this coffin.

On which side did the tree fall? What was done at the judgement last Saturday night? Well, dear brethren, concerning the judgement, our Blessed Lord has revealed to us two of His great secrets.

In the first place He has taught us that nothing in the past can escape His all-seeing Eye when we come before His tribunal. The recording angels have preserved a picture, a representation of our lives so accurate and exact in all its details, so faithful, so perfect, in fact so life-like, as we say, that photography cannot vie with their work. Every act, every word, every thought, every omission, every hidden motive and intention and desire of our hearts is there stereotyped and reproduced to the very life with the most unerring truth. You remember, brethren, how on a certain day, Balthasar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his nobles, and had the sacred vessels which his father Nabuchodonosor had carried away from Jerusalem set upon the tables. And while they all drank and praised their idols, suddenly, "in that same hour, there appeared fingers, as it were of the hand of a man, writing over against the candlestick upon the surface of the wall."* "At the sight the king's countenance changed, and his thoughts troubled him, and the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees struck one against the other." Even so would terror come upon us and unman us in our giddiest hour of

* Dan. v.

pleasure, or in the midst of our most urgent business, if we could see the hand of the recording angel noting and reproducing for the judgement, by day and by night—in the church, in the dining-room, in our working-room, in the room where we take our rest—our deeds, our words, our thoughts, our omissions, our negligences. We utter many words in the course of a week; and to us they seem to be gone by for ever, as that breath of wind that cooled and refreshed for a little moment, and then passed on its way we know not whither. And in the secret of our souls, how many thoughts well up like the bubbles in a standing pool. They are gone, they have disappeared, it seems to us, for ever. Not so, for they are all stored up and shall all come back, and we must confront them all once more at the judgement. For "after death the judgement," and "for every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account of it in the day of judgement."*

Our Blessed Lord has taken great pains to impress this truth upon us, that nothing can escape His knowledge when we are judged. "It shall come to pass at that time," He says, by His prophet Sophonias, that "I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and will visit on the men that are settled on their lees."† Observe carefully His phrase, dear brethren. "I will visit on the men that are settled on their lees." For as wine in the cask that is not disturbed for many years rests there settled on its lees, so the man of this world who, as the Holy Ghost expresses it, "has peace in his possessions, the man who is at rest, whose ways are prosperous in all things,"‡ and to whom, in consequence, the remembrance of

* Matt. xii. † Soph. i. 12. ‡ Eccles. xli.

death is most bitter, lives on like the cask of wine settled on his lees. He has committed many sins, done many evil deeds, spoken many wicked words, harboured many foul thoughts, neglected duty often and often, and yet he goes on laughing and enjoying life. All his sins have sunk down like lees to the bottom of the cask, and there they lie undisturbed, till, on a sudden, in the middle of the night, the summons of the angel is heard: "Give an account of thy stewardship," Christian man, "for now thou canst be steward no longer."* Then in an instant all this mass of corruption, the iniquity of a long life, is stirred up, and all its foulness discovered. Not one tittle escapes notice.

Now, therefore, the Judge proceeds with His work. "I will search Jerusalem with lamps." For each of God's commandments is a lamp, a burning light, shining bright, that ought to have given light to his footsteps. Each precept is compared with his practice, with his deeds, his words, his inmost thoughts, his omissions, and his negligences. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole mind." This is the first and great commandment. Have you, Christian man, during your little day on earth, so loved your God? your good God? your God who created you? who was your Father? your God who loved you so well that He died for you? This is, I say, the greatest and chief commandment, and the second is like to it: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Have you so loved your neighbour as yourself? Have you shared with your neighbour in his necessity? Have you defended the character of your absent neighbour with the spirit and energy with which

* Luke xvi.

you defend your own good name? "Honour thy father and thy mother." Have you so honoured them? "Thou shalt not steal." Have you carefully forborne from wronging your hired servant and the tradesman who worked for you? "Thou shalt not commit adultery, nor even in thought covet thy neighbour's wife." Have you, with prudent vigilance and resolute fortitude, kept your soul from the lust of the flesh, which has subdued so many, and continues to consign so many to the eternal prison-house of hell?

"I will search Jerusalem with lamps"; and "there is nothing hidden that shall not be brought to light." How can anything possibly escape the eye of our Judge, dear brethren? For are we not so created and constituted that we never can walk alone, separated from Him, for one instant? If we take one footstep, God must wait on us as a servant and support us and help us. If we feed ourselves, He must assist to lift our hand to our mouths. If we speak, He must aid our tongues to utter. If we think in secret, He must every instant be with us to help our minds to form each thought. "Lord, Thou hast proved me and known me," the inspired Psalmist writes; "Thou hast known my sitting down and my rising up. Thou hast understood my thoughts afar off."* That is to say, long before they were fully matured in my soul Thou hast seen their gradual formation. "Thou hast known all things, O Lord, the last and those of old"—the doings of my early childhood as well as the thoughts of this morning. "Thy knowledge is become wonderful to me; it is high, and I cannot reach to it. Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit, and whither shall I flee from Thy face? If I

* Ps. cxxxviii.

ascend into heaven, Thou art there. If I descend into hell, Thou art present. If I take my wings early in the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there also shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me."

Mark well, dear brethren, this awful truth. Our God not only sees what we are doing and where we are going, but must Himself accompany us and lead us by the hand all the way and in every hour of life. So that even when we are sinning against Him—if a man go forth to steal, or lifts his hand to strike, or stirs his tongue to calumniate or blaspheme—the sinner actually cannot carry out his purpose, cannot accomplish his sin without being helped by his Creator, and the help needed his Creator in sorrow gives. For the Lord God when He created bound Himself to be the servant of man, to help him in whatever work man may choose to put Him to. To man He gave a free will. Man during his little hour here on earth is master; our God is for the moment subject to man, and has to serve him. Therefore it is that by the mouth of Isaias His prophet He complains so feelingly to man: "Thou hast made Me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied Me with thy iniquities." * How then can any sin of deed or word escape the knowledge of God, since He has been obliged, so bitterly against His will, to serve me and take part in each transgression?

Here, then, is one side, the dark side of the awful judgement, as it is revealed to us; but, thank God, there is another. For another revelation has been made to us by our Lord concerning the judgement, as full of comfort as the first is of terror.

* Isa. xliii,

This second revelation we find first of all insinuated in that Psalm which we so often say for the dead: "If Thou shalt observe iniquities, Lord, Lord, who shall stand it?"* Here we see a suggestion that though God knows all our sins with the most perfect knowledge, yet He may not be disposed to observe or notice them. And if we follow up this thought and examine carefully all that has been revealed concerning the judgement, this is precisely the great truth impressed on us, that though in some cases our Lord is compelled to use all His knowledge, and observe every sin and chastise each iniquity, yet in many other cases, on the contrary, the sinner is able to say with King Ezechias: "O Lord, Thou hast cast all my iniquities behind Thy back."†

In every case, of course, God has complete and perfect knowledge. In every case the recording angel has preserved a most faithful photograph of life. In each case the devil, the accuser of the brethren, is there to use all his craft and cunning and skill to compass our condemnation. And in some cases the Judge must observe, and does observe, each sin, listens to each accusation, and inflicts the just sentence. But in other cases He has cast all the evil behind His back. He turns aside from the accuser with scorn, and will hear nothing against the soul that stands there for judgement. Now, why this difference? Why this seeming partiality? Our Blessed Lord has Himself given us a very full explanation of His mode of proceeding at the judgement-seat.

For, in the first place, He has revealed to us that He has bound Himself by this law: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall find

* Ps. cxxix. † Isa. xxxviii.

mercy." * This is a fixed inviolable rule, which nothing can set aside. And, therefore, the real question to be determined when the soul of this departed Christian gentleman went to the judgement, was not whether he had done evil or broken the commandments of God; but all attention was fixed on the point, Has he, or has he not, been merciful? If he has been merciful, he must find mercy. If he has not, judgement without mercy must come on him, because he did not show mercy. This is an all-important doctrine with regard to the judgement after death; and, therefore, dear brethren, I beg of you to bear with me while I seek to strengthen what I have said, and establish very firmly one of the most consoling truths of our Lord's Gospel.

We have, then, from the lips of our Blessed Lord Himself, a revelation of what passed at the judgement of this Christian father when he expired last Saturday evening. For, a day or two before His own bitter Passion, our Blessed Saviour made known to us the plan and method which He follows at the judgement, by which His work is marvellously simplified. Two dying men draw their last breath here on earth in the same hour; two trembling souls appear in the same moment before the Judge. On one He fixes His eyes with a tenderness, and a compassion, and a charitable love beyond all our thoughts, and utters the short word, "Come, you blessed of my Father; for I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat, and I was thirsty, and you gave Me to drink." † Observe, dear brethren, this is our Blessed Saviour's own account of the judgement. There is no careful and elaborate investigation into the commissions and omissions of

* Matt. v. † Matt. xxv.

this man during his years on earth. He may at some time of his life have committed sins of different kinds, but there is no allusion to them. All attention is rivetted on one point: has he, or has he not, abounded in works of mercy? Once ascertained that he has been merciful, all is ended. It is in vain that the malignant accuser draws attention to misdeeds, to sins and negligences; the Lord has cast them behind His back. And He must do so, because He has bound Himself by His solemn covenant: "The merciful shall find mercy." All is settled for ever. Come, blessed one; for "I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat."

Some of you might well interrupt me here, and ask why I dwell on a text so trite and worn as this is. Most true, brethren, I doubt whether there is any other text that we hear more often. And, therefore, all the more strange, and wonderful beyond thought is what our Saviour adds, that when the merciful man hears at the judgement-seat the familiar and hackneyed words which he has been listening to on earth from childhood, they will burst upon him with such a stupendous novelty, that crushed and overwhelmed by the weight of unexpected gladness that has rushed upon his soul, he will exclaim with a reverential incredulity, unable to believe and realize the glad tidings: "When, O Lord, when did I ever see Thee hungry and fed Thee? No, surely I never had that happiness." And the burning Heart of our Saviour will insist: "Yes, yes, blessed, thrice blessed of My Father, come; for 'as often as you did it to the least of My little ones, you did it to Me.'"

Brethren, we often think how overwhelmed we shall be if God observes our iniquities. This

He never will do, if it rests with Him. His pleasure and delight is to note and observe, to magnify and exaggerate every little thing we have ever done for Him. Not even a drop of water given for Him is forgotten. And hence it is the marvellous, the prodigious, the boundless gratitude of the Sacred Heart that will crush us down in His presence, and with such a resistless force that if it were possible for the redeemed, the saved and immortal soul to die, it would die before the judgement-seat of sheer joy, of gladness utterly unbearable.

And then, His Sacred Heart filled with a grief that we cannot measure, our Lord turns to the other soul come from the valley of tears, and, sorely against His will, says to His own child, whom He created for Himself: "Depart, depart, accursed."

And why? Is it for sins of gluttony, or drunkenness, or immorality, or blasphemy? They are not mentioned. Why not? Because they are not the true and real cause of damnation. The true and real and decisive cause of eternal perdition is that which our Blessed Saviour specifies: "I was thirsty, and you gave Me not to drink; sick, and you did not visit Me."

But if the saint was startled and stunned and taken altogether by surprise and overwhelmed with astonishment when he heard his sentence, what wonder that the sinner recoils and starts back, and, mad with insolent defiance, denies—utterly and loudly denies—the charge as a calumny: "When did I ever see Thee thirsty, and did not give Thee to drink?" Once more, therefore, our Blessed Saviour—sadly, this time, most sadly—confirms and proves His words: "Yes, all is true; for as

often as you did not do it to the least of My little ones, you did it not to Me."

I have said, brethren, that the true and real cause of damnation is not the sins of commission —the sins of iniquity, the perjuries, the blasphemies. Why do I say so? Because, even after all these sins were perpetrated, the sinner could have won mercy by doing mercy. The covenant of the Lord stands unskaken. "The Lord hath sworn it: He never will repent." It is the criminal neglect of mercy that seals his doom.

I know, dear brethren, that there is danger of some being scandalized at what I say, as if I were teaching that a man might live and die in sin and still purchase mercy by his alms; for this would indeed be a wicked falsehood. But I have no need to have recourse to falsehood, for the truth is itself marvellous beyond all our conception. For the strict truth, again and again inculcated in the Sacred Scriptures, is that if a man do his duty in almsgiving he will not die in sin, and will not live in sin. Before his death he will have a grace to move him to true repentance, and as far as the East is from the West the Lord will remove his iniquities from him; and more than this, if he does his duty in almsgiving, a grace will be given to him long before death to resist temptation, and not to fall into those sins which are "the sting of death" and the cause of damnation. The doctrine is strange indeed, brethren, and most marvellous. But it is God's truth. Mark how often and in how many different ways it is revealed to us. Holy Tobias, when he thinks his end is near, calls his son to give him his parting word; and what is his last solemn lesson? "Give alms according to thy substance, and according to thy

ability be merciful. Turn not away thy face from any poor person, for so it will come to pass that the Lord will not turn away His face from thee. For," he continues—and I pray you, brethren, to lay up his words in your heart—"almsdeeds deliver from all sin and from death, and will not suffer the soul to go into darkness."* Weigh well, I beseech you, brethren, this astounding word: "Almsdeeds will not suffer the soul to go into darkness." So then, even if in the last hour all looked hopeless, and the dying sinner seemed hardened and impenitent, and if now the drops of sweat are on the forehead, and the doctor whispers that he is powerless, and the friends have commenced their tears and sobbing, and the spirits of darkness are waiting impatient and sure of their prey—yet, I say, that even in this extreme case, were such a case possible, if the dying man has really done his duty well in almsgiving, his works of mercy will never suffer his soul to go into darkness. Before it is too late, while life still lasts, a grace will come into his heart like the grace given to the Good Thief on Calvary; and even though no minister of God can be found to pronounce absolution, yet the cry of the poor will prevail, and the Lord will Himself out of heaven speak the word, "I absolve thee."

"Almsdeeds will not suffer the soul to go into darkness. Alms will be a great confidence before the Most High God to them that give it."†

Need I say more? I will but add one other sacred word, uttered by one greater and more holy than Tobias: one word spoken by our Lord Himself in the last days of His life. It was when, in words of thunder, he was making His

* Tob. iv. † Tob. iv.

last effort to bring the souls of the Scribes and Pharisees into repentance before it was too late. "Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees," He was saying, "hypocrites; you clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but your inside is full of rapine and iniquity. Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, because you shut the gate of heaven against men; for you yourselves do not enter in, and those that are going in you suffer not to enter. Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you go round about the sea and land to make a proselyte, and when he is made you make him a child of hell two-fold more than yourselves."*

You see, brethren, how the wickedness of these arch-miscreants, who are seducing and corrupting all the people, makes our Saviour lay aside all His gentle meekness and speak such words as He would speak to Satan in His anger; and yet in the very midst of these terrible "woes," He changes suddenly His tone, and actually, to these doubly and trebly-dyed murderers of souls, to these teachers and masters of iniquity, whose souls are red with the blood of so many victims, He says most gently: "As for the rest, give alms, and all shall be made clean to you."†

Listen, brethren, and be astonished! how here even in this eleventh hour an offer is made to these ministers of Satan that they can have all the past forgiven if they will only now give alms and be merciful; and it is because they reject His offer and will not even now do mercy that they themselves are rejected, and find no mercy, and finally doom themselves by their own cry: "His blood be on us and on our children."

* Matt. xxiii. † Luke xi.

But, some one will perchance say, this doctrine is all in favour of the rich, since they can give alms and buy forgiveness; but what are the poor to do, who can give no alms? Not so, dear brethren, for it is the poor man who can most easily give the best and most precious alms. A rich man who gives alms, even in large quantities, seldom gives any that does not come out of his superfluities, his abundance. For the most part he feels not the loss of what he gives. His alms are indeed good coin in the eyes of God, but they are inferior, *like our copper coin*. Next come they who give alms out of a store that is not absolutely necessary to them, but still they cannot spare it without feeling the loss. They give away what they could easily find use for to secure more comforts for themselves or their children. These alms are in God's eyes *precious silver*.

Lastly come the poor man's alms, who gives out of his necessity; the widow's mite, the price of her daily food. Such alms are *gold*, *pure gold*, *priceless gold*, in the sight of God.

So that in reality it is far more easy for a poor man to give precious golden alms than for the rich man. The rich man must go far, very far, in almsgiving, before he begins really to draw upon his necessities, whereas the first penny that the poor man gives is a golden alms out of what he sorely wants.

We may learn good truth from an old proverb: "The nearer the bone, the sweeter the meat." A man who is so poor as not to have even one penny to give, may yet give alms that are in God's sight diamonds and priceless pearls, because they are near the bone. When, for in-

stance, he gives in charity the sweat of his brow and the labour of his body to earn a little help for a sick neighbour, and the earnest prayers of his heart and the tears of his eyes for the conversion of his child, his friend, or perchance one . . has done him wrong, what word can express the value of such alms?

And now, brethren, I beg you also to bear in mind that one alms becomes better than another if by study and thought and painstaking we make one alms more and more useful to our fellow-men. And hence it is better to give to our neighbour's soul than to his body. It is better to do a work of mercy that will reach a thousand who are in want than to benefit one or two. It is better to do a work of mercy that will go on bearing fruit when we have left this world rather than one that shall be short-lived as ourselves.

I have said all this about almsgiving, brethren, because Mr Joseph Weld was pre-eminently a man of almsgiving; I may say that in the latter years of his life almsgiving was his predominant passion. Political economists have at times cried "Shame upon him," because, as they said, he encouraged mendicity by his fixed habit of having not only food, but the usual shilling also ready for the wayfarer who called at his door—a rule so faithfully observed that a begging man has been known to protest against sixpence given to him by a servant, and to insinuate that there had been some fraud, since "Mr Weld always gave a shilling."

The poor and the suffering were ever in his thoughts. "Say a *De Profundis* to-night, nurse," he would say before he fell asleep, "or a decade;

as the weather is so rough, there may be shipwrecks to-night."* And though our Lord had given him a large share of His bitter chalice to drink by sending him long years of bodily suffering, yet his habitual thought was: "What are our sufferings to those of the poor; we have many comforts, they few or none."

Time, however, does not allow me to dwell on his countless daily acts of almsgiving and considerate kindness which formed an unbroken chain of works of mercy; but I must for a moment draw your attention to the church in which we are assembled and to the adjoining school, which were the alms given by himself and his holy wife to the people of Lymington. For of all the many ways of doing mercy, I know of none of greater practical utility than to build a church and erect a Christian school where church and school are wanted.

For a church, brethren, is the Christian's *Home*. It is in the church the child is really born, at the font of baptism, to the everlasting life of heaven. Above all, to the poor man the Christian church is his happy home, where many of his brightest hours are spent.

Again, the church is not only the poor Catholic's home, it is the *school* where he learns all that is best worth knowing. Experience fully proves that, even where there is no school alongside, so large an amount of Christian instruction is gained by the pious Catholic who regularly attends the sacred Offices of the Church that in the end he has received an invaluable education. The altar

* Mr Joseph Weld, more than any of his brothers, had shared his father's nautical tastes, and been his companion on board the *Alarm*, the *Arrow* and the *Lulworth Castle*. Hence his compassion for the shipwrecked.

teaches him the story of man's redemption; the pulpit teaches him; the confessional teaches him; the font of baptism teaches him; the Stations round the walls make him familiar with the sacred Passion of our Lord; and the holy rosary in his hands brings home to him every day of his life, and as he lingers on his death-bed, all the mysteries of our Lord's human life and death and resurrection. Nor is the church only a home and a school to the poor man; it is the *hospital* where the wounds of his soul are healed; and it is also *the innocent theatre* where the glorious services refresh his weary soul and say to him the cheering word, *Sursum corda*—"Lift up your heart, poor man, to your home in heaven."

And remember, dear brethren, that it was not *out of his superfluities* that this good Christian gentleman found means first to build the *church* and then the *school*, and afterwards to adorn the house of God, because he loved the beauty of God's house. Brought up in childhood in the luxury and splendour of Lulworth Castle—where the reigning monarch of this country was so glad to enjoy the hospitality of his grandfather—when that noble mansion ceased to be his home, who would have blamed him if, limited now to the pittance of a younger son, he had said to the numerous applicants for charity—their name was legion—that he wanted the whole of his small income for the befitting maintenance of his numerous family? But these were not his thoughts; he had engraven on his heart the words of Tobias: "Turn not away thy face from any poor person, and so it shall come to pass that the face of the Lord shall not be turned away from thee." So that, in good truth, it is a perplexing problem to know where he found means to give alms as

largely as he did. For in addition to this chief and great act of charity—the church and the adjoining school—we must bear in mind that his alms to priests and convents that had recourse to him for assistance were so frequent that I have heard it said by one who had seen his cheque-book that it would not be an exaggeration to say that almost every second cheque drawn seemed to be an alms given.

One special and favourite act of almsgiving with him was to have the Holy Sacrifice offered for the souls departed. If the news of a death arrived, even of one nowise related to him, his first impulse was to have Mass offered for the soul called away. He had, I may say, in the very centre of his heart, the tender feeling for the holy dead which has come down to us from the early days of the Church. The ancient faith which filled the great St Augustine with such an earnest desire to obtain prayers for the soul of his sainted mother, and in far earlier days moved the heroic Judas Machabeus to send twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem to have sacrifice offered for his brave comrades who fell in battle *—that spirit lives still in all true Catholics, and, to use a homely phrase, Mr Joseph Weld had it in the marrow of his bones.

We all believe most firmly in the Communion of Saints—that there is a fellowship between the blessed saints in heaven, the holy dead in purgatory, and all the children of the Christian Church on earth; and we believe most firmly, and accept with all our hearts the words dictated by the Holy Spirit: "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins."†

* 2 Mach. xii. † Ibid.

Mr Joseph Weld had this faith most deeply implanted in his soul. He fully understood that our Blessed Lord, knowing how necessary it is for all of us to win mercy by doing mercy, has purposely multiplied our opportunities for almsgiving, not only by surrounding us here on earth on every side with the sick and the suffering and the poor, and with legions of helpless children, but also by bringing within our reach the holy dead, who, though God's beloved children, and sure of being one day with Him in heaven, are yet detained in that prison of which our Lord spoke, whence no one can come out till he has paid the last farthing. Thence rises up by day and by night their ceaseless and most touching appeal to us: "Have pity on me, have pity on me; you at least, my friends, have pity on me!"

In conclusion, to come back to the one great question, "To which side did the tree fall?" I answer that I believe it fared well with this faithful servant of our Lord at the judgement-seat. And the reasons for my hopes are these:

1. Because he was, as I have said, eminently a man of almsgiving.

2. Because even in this life we see some of those special blessings of God, which are the reward of almsgiving, come down on him and his house. For, first of all, he was singularly blessed in his marriage, and a blessed Christian marriage is a grace that seldom fails to secure a happy death and a happy eternity. The sacrament of Matrimony, when worthily received, is a wonderful help to salvation, a preparation for heaven, just as the unblessed marriages which abound at present in this land are foretastes of the hopeless discord of hell. Mr Weld's married life, spent with the admirable wife whom we buried seven

years ago, was, I may say, not darkened even by a passing cloud.

3. Then, too, the blessing of God was on his children. In his heart there was ever true paternal love for them, and on their side they had nothing but sincere veneration and filial love for him and their mother.

4. Moreover, the testimony of those who lived with him is singularly friendly and unanimous—nothing but want of time hinders me from laying before you the words that have been written concerning him—and I believe that the judgement of those who live with us is commonly the judgement of God.

5. Besides this, it is well-nigh sixty years since I first met Mr Weld at college, where he had been already some years when I arrived. In those early days he was quite remarkable as a peaceful youth who never made an enemy; and I believe that his manhood and old age have answered to his boyhood, and that he has gone through life a lover of peace, a man without enemies.

6. Then, again, it was well known to many that during the last seven years, since the death of his wife, he has spent his suffering life in habitual preparation for a holy death.

7. Again, I have great hopes that it has fared well with him, because our Lord chose him out in his latter years for a large share of His Cross. His bodily infirmities were his constant companions; and grace and patience and the spirit of prayer came to him with suffering. For suffering, especially when protracted, has often the effect of producing great depression that disinclines the soul for prayer. Not so in this case.

8. And this is the last consoling proof that

his alms were blessed by our Blessed Lord. For to the last he was able to conquer pain and weariness so far as to multiply earnest prayer. Several times during the last few days he humbly confessed his sins and received the holy absolution. Within three or four hours of his death he was saying the Rosary of the Dead for the holy souls, and throughout the last day he was often heard repeating ejaculations to which were attached Indulgences for the souls departed.

It would be cruel if all these good grounds for hope should make us forget him as if he needed no help; and we may, I think, be sure that one who had the grace to be so mindful of the holy dead will not be forgotten so long as he has need of help. Meanwhile, we know, I think, enough to warrant us to go home from this funeral service consoled and edified, and saying in the silence of our heart, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for their works shall follow them."

NOTE.—It was touching and edifying to see how fast the tears flowed from the eyes of the good priest who had been Mr Weld's friend and guide for many long years, and not less so to hear the faithful servant who had lived with him for thirty-two years say so earnestly: "I have been two-and-thirty years with Mr Weld, and most gladly would I serve him and his good wife as many years more, even if they could only give me bread and water to live upon. I was so happy with such a kind master and mistress."

R. I. P.

Kind reader, pray for his soul and the souls of all the Faithful departed.

APPENDIX V.—Thomas Weld, Esq., of Lulworth, and Mary Weld his daughter, in Religion Mother Mary de Sales

Mr Joseph Weld, the subject of this Funeral Discourse, though the youngest of four brothers, bore the name of his father, Mr Joseph Weld of Lulworth Castle, who through the achievements of the *Alarm* and the other yachts which he planned himself and built, and on board of which he loved to take command, became so well known among those who had at heart the ships of old England. A large number of friends and acquaintances were proud of "the Old Commodore," as they used to call him. Mr Joseph Weld, of the Lodge, Lymington, of whom I have been speaking, survived all his brothers and sisters. I have already mentioned that more than any of his brothers he was associated with his father in all his yachting expeditions, and perhaps it was from continual exposure to weather during his younger days that he suffered so cruelly from rheumatism in his last years.

At the close of the last century, when the French Revolution burst, first upon France and then upon Europe, like a destructive deluge, Mr Thomas Weld, the then Squire of Lulworth, was residing on the Continent to be near his sons who were being educated at the old college of the Jesuits at Liège. The Academy of Liège, as it was called, had long been the favourite place

of education with the Catholic families of England; and though the Jesuits had been suppressed in 1773, the Liège Academy continued, with the sanction of the Prince-Bishop, to be directed by fathers who had been members of the suppressed Society, till at length the near approach of Dumouriez at the head of the French revolutionary army compelled them to break up the college and make a hurried escape into England. A small quantity of church plate and some vestments were rescued and found their way to Stonyhurst. Among the rest was a large silver monstrance, which, though a portion was lost on the way, is still so much admired for its elegance and workmanship. It used to be told to us at college how old Father Stone, who when I saw him was ninety years of age, in his anxiety to save in the last moments some valuables from the French plunderers, only managed to carry away a few pewter pepper-castors. This Father Marmaduke Stone and Father Charles Plowden and Father Charles Brooke were afterwards among the best known of those who came over from Liège. Mr Thomas Weld joined in the exodus, and made haste to return to Lulworth to provide a home for several ex-Jesuits, among the rest the Abbé Grou, since well known through his spiritual writings.

Mr Thomas Weld was a man of large possessions; so that, though he had by his wife, who belonged to the old Catholic family of the Stanleys of Hooton in Cheshire, a large family of fifteen children, he was able to provide handsomely for all. He had the property of Leagram in Lancashire for his third son George; the Manor of Chideock in Dorset for his fourth son Humphrey; and the Pilewell estate near Ly-

mington for his fifth son James. Besides these was the large property round Lulworth Castle which was reserved for his eldest son Thomas, and eventually fell to the lot of the second son Joseph.

This eldest son was born in the year of the suppression of the Society of Jesus, 1773, and married in the year 1796, the year after the dispersion of the college at Liège; became a widower in the year of the Battle of Waterloo, 1815, and after studying theology in Paris under the celebrated Abbé Caron, was ordained priest when forty-eight years of age, and, about five years later, consecrated Bishop of Amycla *in partibus*, and named coadjutor Bishop to the see of Kingston in Canada, with right of succession. Owing to some unknown causes he never went out to his diocese; but after some stay in England, during which he was distinguished by his charity to the poor, he went to Italy with his daughter, who was in delicate health, and very soon after his arrival in Rome was nominated cardinal by Pope Pius VIII, in 1830. As the cardinal died without male issue in the year 1837, the Lulworth estate came into the possession of the second son, Mr Joseph Weld, "the Old Commodore," of whom I have already spoken.

Out of his wide possessions Mr Thomas Weld not only provided for his children, but became a good father to the priests and religious banished from France and the Low Countries. The Carmelites, the Trappists, and the ex-Jesuits he took under his care. To the exiled ex-Jesuits from Liège he was a princely benefactor, a friend in need and a friend in deed. When they landed at Hull, houseless and home-

less, he made them a present of the grand old family mansion at Stonyhurst, that there they might continue the work of the Academy at Liège.* Tradition used to say that when the exiles made their way across country from Skipton, the late Charles Waterton, of Walton Hall, known as the Wanderer, and George Clifford, of Wycliffe, till then scholars of the College of Liège, won the race and were the first to enter the new College of Stonyhurst. Which of the two took possession first was always a disputed point. For it was asserted that while George Clifford was seeking a legitimate admission at the door the irrepressible wanderer gained an entrance through a window. More exact research of modern times has ascertained that George Clifford entered first, and that Charles Waterton did not come to college till a later date.

Mr Thomas Weld gave afterwards to the Society gifts more precious than house and land, for his son Edward entered the restored Society and died a holy novice. Another son, John, also entered the novitiate in the year of the restoration of the Society in England, 1803, and was

* Besides the mansion Mr Weld gave to the exiled fathers the spacious gardens which then covered, I believe, about eight acres, also a plantation known as the Crow-wood, and the large ponds in front of the college. In course of time the fathers purchased a much larger tract of land out of Mr Weld's estate. A considerable portion of the beautiful garden—as necessity knows no law—they were obliged to convert into a playground for the scholars. We used, moreover, to be told of another act of vandalism necessitated afterwards by straitened finances. Stonyhurst was among the first, if not the first, of public institutions lighted by gas in this country; and as the garden was adorned with many colossal classic statues, some of them very graceful, but all unfortunately made of lead, several of these were melted down to supply gas-pipes for the new enterprise.

Rector of Stonyhurst College when the battle of Waterloo was won in 1815. It can be easily understood that as the men driven out of Liège, and now at Stonyhurst, looked upon themselves to a certain degree as victims of the Revolution, they followed with no ordinary interest the course of events on the Continent. As soon then as Father Weld, the Rector, received the news of Wellington's victory at Waterloo, his English and Catholic enthusiasm had full play. At once he hastened down from his room, threw open the doors of all the school-rooms and peremptorily put an end to all dull work and enjoined high holiday. In the wild excitement a happy thought occurred to one of the daring spirits, roused to frantic energy, that somewhere about the premises there was an ancient cannon long disused, or perhaps never used till now. This cannon, despite all warnings that prudence no doubt whispered in their ears, was after persevering efforts duly loaded and fired off, and the unusual report and the shouts that followed reached one class-room which in the bustle had been overlooked. Here the professor was lecturing on mathematics; and it so chanced that he was a Frenchman, an ex-Jesuit exiled from France, as so many others of the French clergy were. His lecture was brought to a sudden stop. The scholars rushed to the doors and windows to ask what was the matter. The answer came quickly. Some of the initiated came rushing into the class-room full of indignant pity for these benighted ones who were still going on with lessons, and told the scholars and the professor also, in such strong home-spun phrases as school-boys love, that the cannon was fired and the boys were shouting

because Wellington had licked the French, and Napoleon was beaten into a cocked hat. The French father was, as so many others are, partly supernatural and partly natural, and therefore, whatever may have gone on in the upper regions of his soul, his natural man was not at all overjoyed to hear that the English had licked the French, and that the grand emperor was down on the ground at their feet as flat as a cocked hat. He said little, but his few words were remembered. "What a nonsense! what a children!" He retired to his room to think over human events.

This French father's real name was Sionnet, but when he landed in England he adopted the name of Simpson, as more manageable in this country, and when afterwards he returned to France as provincial of the restored province, he still retained to his death the name of his adoption, Simpson. Two little stories were long remembered concerning Father Simpson. The first was that while living under Father Weld at Stonyhurst he joined, if I mistake not, to his mathematical talents some knowledge of music, and used to play the organ in the modest college chapel. At the organ he was not so exact in time as he was in his mathematical demonstrations in the class-room. The consequence was that occasionally one of the singers would whisper in his ear: "Mon Père, you are too slow; you are falling behind." To which expostulation he would answer with much composure: "Never mind; I will come up."

The second story is that while in England he became accustomed to the habit which then prevailed among preachers of reading their sermons from manuscript. To this practice Catholic

priests adhered as rigidly as the Church of England parsons. I do not remember during my college course more than a very few sermons that were not read. Father Simpson perceived that this method, with its many inconveniences, had one advantage, inasmuch as it secured for the audience a sermon upon which thought and study had been bestowed. When, therefore, he returned to France as provincial, to model and form the new province, he very often inculcated upon the young fathers there that they ought to write all their sermons. He did not insist on their adopting the English method so far as to read their sermons from the pulpit, but he was very emphatic that all their sermons ought to be carefully studied and written. On one occasion a young father who, we may suppose, found writing a weary task, ventured to quote the text, *Ex abundantia, mon Père*—"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Father Simpson's reply was brusque enough: *Ah! votre sotte abondance! Je n'en veux pas.*

Father John Weld did not long survive the Waterloo holiday. He died as Rector of Stonyhurst before the first anniversary of Waterloo came round.*

I have already spoken of seven of the sons of Mr Thomas Weld: the three who entered the ecclesiastical state, and the four who married and resided on the properties settled upon them by their wealthy father.

A word now concerning his daughters. The eldest, Juliana, entered the Third Order of St Francis in Belgium, and died young. The

* Father Weld's epitaph at Stonyhurst describes him as "*pietate, innocentiâ, modestiâ spectandus, carus domi forisque.*"

second, Mary, is described by those who knew her as endowed in a high degree both with natural gifts and heavenly graces.

The holy Abbé Grou devoted himself very assiduously to her spiritual training, and wrote several ascetical treatises for her use. At length her mind was fully made up that she must devote herself to God in the Visitation Order. Her father, though so good a man, thought that he could not prudently give her permission to enter the one convent of the Order then existing in England. It had only just been founded at Acton. Of the six sisters who were to form the foundation, three had lost heart on their way to England. The actual community consisted of two professed sisters and one or two novices. When we read in the annals of the convent that an election was duly held, and that of those two professed one was chosen Superioress and the other Assistant, it is difficult to understand how the ballot was managed. However this may be, it is certain that Mr Weld held out for a considerable time, and gave at last his consent under circumstances quite unique in the history of vocations.

King George III., who was partial to Weymouth, made acquaintance with Mr Weld; and not unfrequently, with his Queen and some of his children, visited Lulworth Castle. Mr Weld, with his numerous sons and daughters around him, used to receive their Majesties on the steps of the castle; and as all the family were musical, they all joined heartily in the National Anthem, "God save the King." This reception used to please the King very much; and the more he saw of the goodness of the whole family, the more his admiration grew; and more than once

he said to Mr Weld, with tears in his eyes: "What, Mr Weld, have none of your children turned out badly?" Mr Weld was able to answer with truth and great gratitude to God: "No, Sire; there is not one among them that is not a consolation to me."* The second daughter, Mary, of whom we are speaking, besides her attractive appearance, her prudence, gentleness, modesty and courteous manners, had also a very good voice, and was a leader in the musical receptions. She thus specially attracted the attention of the old King, who took great pleasure in her company. On one occasion, when the King was staying either at Weymouth or some place not very far off, Mr Weld was invited by some gentlemen in the neighbourhood to meet his Majesty at dinner. When the King saw him arrive, he immediately asked: "Where is my friend, your daughter, Miss Weld?" Mr Weld was obliged to explain that she had not been invited; but the King insisted that his own carriage must be ordered out, and Mr Weld must go and fetch her. Mr Weld therefore went

* Mr Weld turned the favour of the King to good account for the religious Orders of men and women then under sentence in France. As they walked together on the Esplanade at Weymouth, he was telling the King that some of his own near relatives were among the number of the outlawed, and that they were at a loss what to do. "Why not bring them to England?" was the King's answer. Mr Weld explained that the penal laws stood in the way which proscribed all religious communities. The King's rejoinder was: "The English are a generous people, and will not be hard on any persons who are in distress." Mr Weld was not slow to act on this suggestion. He took active measures to bring over several of the suffering communities to England, amongst the rest the Franciscan nuns now at Taunton; and the King's wishes had such weight that orders were sent to the Custom House officers not to examine the baggage brought over by the exiled religious. This was the beginning of a new era for the religious orders in England.

for her. Her preparations were made as speedily as possible; and as she entered the carriage, Miss Weld said to her father: "You know, papa, that one of the first questions which the King will ask me will be, when am I going to the convent? Must I still give him the same answer, that nothing is decided?" The father, much moved, replied: "Well, my child, you may tell him that I have given my consent." Both father and daughter probably long remembered that dinner-party, and she no doubt said many a fervent prayer for the King.

In due time, then, her father took her to Acton, to the new convent; but when she found there the realities of the situation—a very small community, and first one novice leaving and then another—her heart for a time lost courage; but grace in the end conquered. In a very few years she was elected Mother Prioress; and, at different times, governed the convent during twenty-four years. During those years the community moved from Acton to Shepton Mallet, and subsequently to their present house at Westbury.

After a few years, her youngest sister, Clara, joined her in the new foundation; later on, her niece also, Miss Emma Weld, of Leagram. And so it happened that before Miss Mary Weld, of whom I am writing, died in her eighty-first year, she had lived under the authority of her younger sister and her niece, who were both in their turn elected Prioress. Though singularly calm and peaceful and cheerful in her exterior deportment, and most kind and considerate to all, especially the younger nuns, her interior sufferings were great during many years of her religious life, and they seemed to increase in her

old age. Through them all she maintained the spirit of conformity with God's will to which Abbé Grou had trained her, and her union to God in prayer was continual. At three o'clock on the first Friday of January, 1861, her life on earth suddenly came to a close—so suddenly that there was barely time to summon the Mother Prioress to her death-bed. Our Blessed Lord had forewarned her and her community that He would come "in the hour ye expect not," but He found her ready.

I have omitted to say that, on one occasion in her early life, she seemed to be within a little of the crown of martyrdom. She was living at Liège in 1792 with her father, in the early days of the French Revolution. The Austrians had been forced to retire from the Low Countries, and the wild, demoniac spirit of the Revolution, with its hatred of religion, was dominant. Miss Weld spent much of her time in the churches of Liège, and there was one sanctuary of our Lady which she specially loved and frequented much. One of the revolutionary gendarmes was watching her goings and comings; and either the evil spirit which urged Saul to nail David to the wall with his spear, or some other kindred spirit, took possession of this fiery soldier, and he deliberately levelled his carbine and fired at Miss Weld. The ball passed over her head. Providence wished her to win her crown by the slower process of helping many souls to sanctity in a convent life.

Three sons, therefore, dedicated themselves to the Church, and three daughters.

Of the remaining daughters, Catherine became Lady Stourton. Eliza was married to Mr Bodenham of Rotherwas. Theresa was mar-

ried to Mr Vaughan of Courtfield; and among her sons were the late Bishop of Plymouth and his brothers, a Jesuit Father and a Redemptorist Father; and among her thirteen grandchildren, one Cardinal, one Archbishop, one Benedictine Father, one Jesuit and two secular priests, besides five daughters consecrated as nuns.

I will only add one more word about these sons and daughters, who were the admiration and envy of King George III., that Mr George Weld, of Leagram in Lancashire, who survived many of his brothers and sisters, mentioned confidentially to his daughter—a nun at Atherstone—that he had fully made up his mind, in case he survived his wife, to go to Stonyhurst and beg to be allowed to end his days as a lay-brother. He did not, however, survive his wife; and his death, as I have mentioned elsewhere, was an example of the way in which God in His mercy oftentimes calls out of life suddenly one well prepared, in order that those who are careless may be roused to watch and make ready. Mr George Weld, during the whole of the month of March, offered up daily prayers to his patron, St Joseph, to beg the grace of a good death; and on the last day of the month suddenly passed away, without receiving any sacraments.

And now to return for a moment to the blessed father of so many good children. Mr Thomas Weld, as I have said, was a man of very large possessions. Like Tobias, he gave abundantly to the poor, and the Lord gave him back a hundred-fold, "heaped up, pressed down, and flowing over."* Besides his charity to the

* The priest who performed the funeral service of Mr Thomas Weld, and who knew him intimately, stated on the occasion

ex-Jesuits at Stonyhurst, he also gave a house near Lulworth and a hearty welcome to a community of Trappists exiled from Meilleraie in France. And when the *émigré* priests were pouring into England, Mr Charles Butler, the nephew of the venerable Alban Butler, who was then a prominent man among the Catholic laity, used to say to those he met: "Go to Lulworth Castle. Mr Weld will take care of you." And so, in truth, he did. Lulworth was, during all those days of persecution, the home of several of the exiles.

Up to that time the room now used as a dining-room had been the castle chapel.* It is said that Mr Weld was the first, since the mis-called Reformation, who was bold enough to build a chapel that was openly and avowedly a chapel. He did not take so rash a step without consulting the King. His Majesty thought the time was come when he might venture, but still counselled him to build so that the structure might pass for a family mausoleum. I call it a rash step, because we must remember that many of the penal laws were still in force, and

that it was his belief that half of Mr Weld's very large income was spent annually in works of charity. What wonder that from his day to the present time we can already count in his family two Cardinals, one Archbishop, one Bishop, one Redemptorist, six secular priests, four Benedictines, five Jesuits, and twelve nuns? Doubtless, there are more unknown to us.

* It was in this domestic chapel that the first Bishop was consecrated for a see in the United States, on the feast of the Assumption, 1790. This was the Right Rev. Dr Carrol, formerly a Father of the Society of Jesus. The consecrating Bishop was Bishop Walmesly, Vicar-Apostolic of the Midland District. As there were but few bishops in England at the time, there were no assistant bishops taking part in the ceremony. Bishop Walmesly was merely attended by Father Charles Plowden, also an ex-Jesuit, and a very devoted friend of Bishop Milner.

notwithstanding the hospitality given to the French exiled clergy, Protestant bigotry was in full force, and could at any moment be roused. I have heard Mr Joseph Weld, the old Commodore, tell how his father was obliged to find some Protestant friend to be the owner of his carriage horses, otherwise any bigoted neighbour could compel him to sell them for £5.*

Mr Thomas Weld, whose marriage had been so blessed, had before his marriage long entertained the idea of becoming a priest. It was only because he was the last of his race that he yielded to the advice of his guides and married, and all through his married life he daily said the priest's office, and he faithfully made his annual retreat. It was for his use that Père Grou drew up one of the four retreats which he has left among his writings. While Père Grou lived, Mr Weld made his retreat at Lulworth. In the year 1810, seven years after Père Grou's death, he went to Stonyhurst to go through the spiritual exercises, before the feast of St Ignatius. At the

* When Mr Weld told King George that either he or one of his near relatives had in former years raised a regiment at his own expense, and, as the penal laws did not permit Catholics to be commissioned officers, served as sergeant in his own regiment, the King said: "These are bad laws that so treat my most loyal subjects." Subsequently, when the country was preparing for possible danger from France, Mr Weld was Lieutenant-Colonel of the Dorset Rangers, a smart cavalry regiment of yeomanry, and his sons were captains in the same regiment. A distinction, however, more dear to him than his military honours, was his intimate friendship with the good and great Bishop Milner, who was the stout champion of orthodoxy in those days when so many Catholics were inclined to sacrifice truth to worldly advancement. So great was his reverence for the venerable bishop that on one occasion at a meeting of the Catholic Association, when Bishop Milner was so pained by the unorthodox spirit maintained by some of the members that he rose and left the room, Mr Weld immediately rose and followed him.

end of the retreat he came out joyous and genial, and, probably accompanied by his Jesuit son, Father John Weld, ordained priest not long before, went into the refectory during the scholars' dinner to cheer them on their festival by singing a song for them. It was while he was singing that God sent the apoplectic stroke which in a few days ended his life—one more instance of a death sudden but not unprovided.*

R. I. P.

Kind reader, pray for their souls and the souls of all the Faithful departed.

* Mr Weld was, as we have seen, one of the wealthiest of the English gentry, and though his own tastes were decidedly ascetical, and his delight was to be with the exiled monks whom he had welcomed to Little Binton, yet he considered it a duty to the Catholic cause to take his proper position among the gentry. Like the holy Duke of Gandia, St Francis Borgia, he knew how to combine hidden self-denial with public and official magnificence. He kept his yacht and also a pack of hounds for hunting. When he visited his estates in different parts of England, he arrived among his tenants in a coach drawn by four horses. When he went to Windsor to return the visit of the King, he had around his carriage four outriders. In fact, he was a good old Catholic gentleman according to St Paul's heart. He could say, "I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry; both to abound and to suffer need" (Phil. iv).

XIV--Mrs Theodore Galton

A Discourse over her Remains in the Chapel of Hadzor, October 20, 1898

In peace . . . . I will sleep and rest. For Thou, O Lord, singularly hast settled me in hope.—Ps. iv.

1. One who knew Mrs Galton intimately in her latter days, and loved her, said to me after her death: "Oh, how I shall miss her! for she was such a calm and quiet friend, and always spoke to me in a motherly way." It was a well chosen word. She was a calm and quiet friend. She was a calm and quiet wife. She was a calm and quiet mother. She was quiet and calm as a mistress. She was quiet and calm and orderly in her practice of religion; calm, quiet and orderly in her works of charity. And, what is most wonderful of all, during the whole course of a long and very painful illness, she was a calm and quiet sufferer.

Through life and in death, the calm and quiet handmaid of the Lord. "In peace I will sleep and will rest."

There was through her life, and especially in the latter years of her life, a very notable calm and tranquillity, like the sleep of a child.

2. St Peter, describing a good Christian wife, writes that she ought to be such that even a pagan husband, "who [does] not believe in the word of God, may be won without the word, by the conversation of [his wife]: considering [her]

chaste conversation with fear"; that is through watching and noticing her chaste and modest life, and her fear of God. He then goes on to say: "Whose adorning let it not be in the outward plaiting of the hair, or the wearing of gold, or the putting on of apparel: but the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptibility of a quiet and meek spirit, which is rich in the sight of God."*

I think that, when listening to these words, they who knew Mrs Galton will find themselves saying inwardly, "Yes, that is exactly what we admired in her"—the *hidden* ornaments *of the heart;* the *incorruptibility of a quiet and meek spirit;* that Christian meekness, so quiet and yet so strong; that meekness which comes from the humble Heart of our Lord into the hearts of those whom He loves; that meekness which seems always to yield, but in the end always conquers, according to our Blessed Lord's word: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land."

It was that incorruptible meekness which, throughout His bitter Passion, enabled our Saviour to be silent, to endure, to pray for His persecutors, and to die; and, by enduring and dying, to conquer.

3. You may remember that, on the last night of His life in this world, our Blessed Saviour, when opening His Sacred Heart with special tenderness to His apostles, said to them: "Peace I leave to you; My peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth do I give unto you."†

Consider these words, dear brethren, for a little while. Call to mind the difference between the peace that this world gives, and the peace that our Blessed Saviour gave to His servant around whose bier we are gathered.

* 1 Pet. iii. † John xiv.

We sometimes notice how physicians, when they cannot work a cure, do what they can by multiplying prescriptions and precautions to make the best of a bad case.

"If you will take care never to be out in the early morning, and never late at night, and never go abroad when the wind is in the east; if you will always, before the winter sets in, go off to a warmer climate; if you are never without a very careful nurse and a thoroughly trusty valet; if every day you take some glasses of that special wine which I have prescribed (a most costly wine); if every day you get a drive in a very easy carriage, with horses perfectly trained; if, above all, you most carefully keep away from all worries—you may go on for a long time yet."

The peace which this world gives is something akin to this: "If you keep in good health; if your affairs prosper; if your income is steady and abundant; if your wife is all devotedness, and your children docile and loving, and your servants attentive and dutiful, and all your friends and neighbours courteous and obliging; if nothing occurs to make you envious, or jealous, or angry, or revengeful, or covetous, or discontented—you may live on in peace." But where on this earth are we to find the well-fenced paradise whence these ills are all shut out?

Such a peace is frail indeed, and very short-lived. Like the flower that holy Job speaks of, "it blooms and is crushed"—*egrcditur et conteritur*. If no blast blows to strip its leaves, if no scorching rays wither it, no passing foot-step crushes it, no wanton hand plucks it, it may live a little while, only a little while.

4. Contrast this with the hardy, the enduring, the long-lived peace which our Saviour gave to

his faithful handmaid. By His psalmist He compares such a one to the evergreen "tree planted near the running waters, which shall bring forth fruit in due season; and his leaf shall not fall off, and everything he does shall prosper." These words remind me very much of what I witnessed during a long intimacy with Mrs Galton; neither the cold nor heat of this world, nor its gales, ever appeared to leave her soul leafless and withered. She always seemed to draw from the running streams of divine grace a heavenly strength and vitality. She was never the barren tree that disappointed its owner by yielding no fruit when fruit was wanted. Through all the changes of this changing world—in whatever circumstances she was placed, whatever duties she had to fulfil, towards God or towards man—in everything she had to do she prospered; that is, with a heavenly prosperity. She had grace enough to do well what it was her duty to do.

I think that all who knew her intimately would testify that there was a very admirable constancy and perseverance in her goodness.

5. The last time I stood here it was to bury her husband. If he had survived her and were here by her coffin to-day to give his witness, he would doubtless say that the word in the Proverbs was a most faithful picture of her: "The heart of her husband trusteth in her. She will render him good and not evil all the days of her life."* His heart reposed in her with a perfect trust, sure that she would render him good and not evil all the days of her life.

So, too, should I be much surprised if any one of her sons could call to mind even one instance

* Prov. xxxi.

in which she was to them anything but a good and true mother. "Her children rose up and called her blessed."* Standing by her grave they have no word to utter but a word of blessing and humble gratitude to God for having given them so good a mother.

So would it also be a surprise to me if any of her servants ever found in her a capricious and uncertain mistress, at one time kind and good-natured, at another harsh and inconsiderate.

There was in her the incorruptibility, that is, the unchanging perseverance of a quiet and meek spirit. The evergreen tree was kept fresh and fruitful by the running waters of Divine grace.

6. The same tranquil constancy was very noticeable in her inward religious life. The promise of God to his faithful servant is this: "The sun shall not burn thee by day, nor the moon by night."† The business of the day, the cares of the day, the distractions of the day, did not choke in her soul the good seed of grace. The weariness of the long and sleepless nights did not tire out her spirit of prayer.

She did not easily allow health, she did not suffer weather, nor easily permit distance to rob her of the consolation and strength which she found at the foot of the altar. Till bodily strength quite failed her, her place was seldom, if ever, vacant, among the Children of Mary, at the annual retreat of eight days.

From the first day when I knew her to the day of her death, I cannot remember any period when she was anything else but the faithful and fervent handmaid of the Lord.

"Like a tree which is planted by the running waters, which shall bring forth fruit in due

* Prov. xxxi. † Ps. cxx.

season: and [its] leaf shall not fall off; and everything [she] shall do shall prosper."

7. In everything, then, that she had to do she prospered—that is, she did her duty well.

But her virtue and her fidelity had to be put to tests more severe. For it is written: "Gold and silver are tried in the fire, but acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation."* And again, "Because thou wert acceptable to God, it was necessary that temptation should prove thee."† So, too, of the holy patriarch, the Holy Spirit tells us that God in His wisdom "gave him a strong conflict that he might overcome; and know that [heavenly] wisdom is stronger than all."‡

It pleased our Lord in His all-wise charity to send His faithful servant, at the close of her life, an illness exceptionally long and painful; that she too might have a strong conflict, and might overcome and know that His grace and His love is stronger than all.

Oftentimes, when I visited her after she had been passing through a fit of acute pain, she used to say to me in simplicity, "I do not think that I was impatient." It was a wonderful grace that enabled her to make with confidence such a revelation. For her days of suffering were not few; nor did her malady spare her. Medical men testify how very severe the agony is that is caused by *angina pectoris*. And the usual solace is that this cruel disease commonly does its work quickly. But in Mrs Galton's case the year began and ended, and another, and another followed, and she always carried her soul in her hands, expecting, when each paroxysm came, to yield it up; but death did not come,

* Ecclus ii. † Tob. xii. ‡ Wisd. xi.

and as she rallied, she would say gently, "It will all have to begin again; but I do not think that I am impatient."

8. And if bodily pain, which is ordinarily an irresistible conqueror, did not so subdue her as to make her impatient, we can say quite as much of the other trials that accompany sickness.

She had in a very high degree a mother's strong love for her children. A visit from one of them was always a most welcome sunshine through the clouds; yet I think that I may safely say that she never became fretful because duty called them so often away from her sick-bed. She was a soldier's daughter, and had a very remarkable share of that love for duty which characterizes a good soldier of this world and a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

Not long before her death, one of her sons, in holy orders, came to bid her good-bye, as he had received what a soldier calls "marching orders." The farewell made her mother's heart bleed; but when she heard him say, "Mother, do you think that I became a Jesuit to be your private chaplain, and to remain always at your side?" she was filled with contentment because of his soldierly sense of duty, and treasured up his words with the proper pride of a good Christian mother.

9. Through her many days and nights of suffering she never let herself exact from her children or her friends that special undivided attention which sickness so often rigorously claims as a right.

For sickness is apt to make us selfish and inconsiderate. We forget conflicting duties; and do not note how jaded and worn out our nurses are becoming. We insist by day and by night

on a continued and unflagging attention. If they can do nothing else for me, there must be some one at hand to talk to me, whenever I want to talk, to relieve the monotony of the slow hours. In contrast to this restless and exacting craving for companionship and interchange of words, the Holy Spirit, describing the wife that "delights her husband," tells us that "her discipline is a gift of God";* that she is a "wise and silent woman"; and adds that "there is nothing so much worth as a well-instructed soul." I think that this description was verified in Mrs Galton. Her discipline, her spirit of self-control, was a great gift of God. She was the tree planted by the running waters, which were ever refreshing her with the necessary strength and vigour. This strong grace of God enabled her to reduce to order the tongue which St James† calls "the restless evil, the world of iniquity, which no man can tame." She was well content to remain for long hours alone, and a silent woman, and could find within her well-instructed soul, and in her books, and her intercourse with God, a contentment which the gossip of this world could not give.

10. But now let us pass a little further.

The Angel Raphael said to the holy man Tobias and his son: "It is good to hide the secret of the king, but honourable to reveal and confess the works of God."‡

Acting on this principle, I have betrayed one of her secrets. I have told you how the ever-present grace of God within her preserved her from being impatient. But there still remains this question: what was the hidden well-spring whence came this constant supply of heavenly

* Ecclus xxvi. † Jas iii. ‡ Tob. xii.

patience—the incorruptibility of a quiet and meek spirit?

I have heard herself account for being able to bear acute attacks without impatience by saying, "It is love that helps me." This was, I believe, the true explanation of her persevering patience, and the incorruptibility of her quiet and meek spirit. The fire of Divine love was burning in her heart.

The spirit of faith was strong in her to a very remarkable degree; and, as I have already said, our Lord had wonderfully established [her] in hope. Out of a strong faith and a very lively hope grew in her heart a warm personal love for her God, her Father and her Redeemer.

I have already applied to her the word of the 4th Psalm, "Singularly, O Lord, hast Thou established me in hope." She seemed to me to have received early in her spiritual life a grace that many faithful souls have long desired, namely, grace to believe with a very firm faith that God loved her. This conviction wonderfully established her in hope; and out of this conviction grew, as a natural consequence, a very ardent love for her God, her Father and her Redeemer.

You may have observed, brethren, that when Lazarus was dying, his sisters Mary and Martha, when they sent word to our Blessed Saviour of his condition, did not say: "He who has loved Thee so well is sick"; but "he whom Thou lovest is sick."* They knew that their brother loved Jesus, but they knew also that Jesus loved Lazarus with a love incomparably greater.

Satan, the father of lies, labours incessantly to prevent God's children from believing with a

* Luke xi.

vivid faith that God is a good Father, who loves His child with a boundless love; and that Jesus Christ is a most devoted Friend and Brother and Bridegroom, who lived and died for each of us. Satan is for ever picturing God to us as the austere Master. To each one he whispers: "It is true that God is good, but your case is exceptional. You have abused too many graces, He cannot love you." And so he tries to persuade each one that he is the exception whom God does not love with a personal love.

This is so much the case, that a well-known spiritual writer has said very truly that it is a bright day indeed in the life of a Christian when he realizes that he is much loved by God; for then strong love for God soon sets in. It is easy to love God much if we first believe with a lively faith that He loves me much. Hence St John writes: "Let us love God because He hath first loved us."

Mrs Galton had in a very remarkable degree the firm confidence that God was to her a most loving Father, and a most loving and compassionate Redeemer. And this very strong conviction, which was habitually in her soul, accounts for that unchanging patience with which she endured each recurring attack of her most painful malady.

One of our poets, when picturing the scene of Jephtha's daughter about to be immolated by her own father, puts these words into her mouth:

> If the hand which I love lay me low,
> There cannot be pain in the blow.

Our Blessed Saviour has taught us the same truth in a better way by His word in the Garden: "The chalice which My Father hath given Me,

shall I not drink it?" When once a child of God has realized that a most loving and all-wise Father is always watching every hair of his head, and that each trouble, each mental agony, each bodily pain is a chalice most lovingly mingled by His own Father, all the bitterness is taken out of the cup.

The Christian martyrs gladly welcomed torments and death, because they knew that the compassionate heart of their crucified Lord was watching, and pouring out for them just such a share of His own chalice as was suited to their weakness.

"Can you not watch one hour with me?" He said to His apostle. So does He say daily to His chosen one: "Can you not suffer one hour with Me?" It is that word, "with Me," which renders the bitter draught sweet.

12. You remember, brethren, our Lord's words, "My yoke is sweet, My burden light." This He said, because He knew that the first and greatest of all His commandments is that we love our God, our Father and our Redeemer, with our whole heart.

If this love is within us, all God's commandments are a sweet yoke and a light burden. If love is not in our hearts, the yoke is not sweet nor the burden light.

If then we wonder at the habitual meekness and calmness with which Mrs Galton passed through a long time of acute bodily suffering, here is the explanation: a very strong sense of God's infinite love for her was fixed deep in her soul. "Wonderfully, O Lord, hast Thou established me in hope." This conviction that God loved her ineffably produced in return a very strong love for her God, her Creator, her Father,

her most loving Redeemer. And consequently, every fresh pain is still the chalice which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? For the Holy Spirit tells us in the Canticles: "That many waters cannot quench love." St John also, as the explanation of the meekness wherewith our Saviour endured His torments and His death, writes this word: "He loves to the end."

His Divine Heart taught her whose grave stands open to-day firmly to believe in Him, strongly to hope in Him, and warmly to love Him to the very end.

It was her love for her God and her intimate sense that she was loved by Him that made her so true a wife, so good a mother, so trusty a friend, so considerate a mistress, so perseveringly patient in suffering, and so faithful a handmaid of the Lord to the end. She loved to the end.

I was not a little surprised during her protracted illness never to discover in her any symptom of fear of death. And her explanation was: "I want to see God." "Love," as St John tells us, "casteth out fear."

13. But, some one may ask, if love renders the fulfilment of duty so easy, why does not our Lord give us all the spirit of love?

I answer, brethren, that God has no other desire but to give us all a strong love of Him. Love is not a gift that He reserves for special saints, for He tells us all: "My first and great commandment is that you love Me."

Why, then, brethren, does not love grow in us all? Because selfishness is in possession. Self is the great enemy of God. I cannot love two Gods. I cannot serve two masters. If self is

my God and my master, I cannot love and serve another.

Therefore we may be quite sure that any one who loves must have first been a soldier, and courageously fought and won many battles against self and against Lucifer.

One who had lived intimately with Mrs Galton, when I asked her, after death had done its work, what was her chief characteristic, answered at once: "She was so straight." This is, as you know, only a familiar way of saying she was so conscientious, so prompt, so unhesitating, so firm, so resolved whenever she saw any duty to be done for God.

We are all aware of the miserable religious differences which afflict this country. Once in her life, after a long time of painful doubt and uncertainty, Mrs Galton judged it to be her clear duty to give pain to all dear to her by breaking away from them, and too, in a way far more agonizing than if she had gone to the far ends of the earth. As I have said, she had the soldierly instinct; she was a soldier, and Christ was her Captain, and therefore, without any hesitation, when He called, she followed to do the will of her Lord.

It was so throughout her latter years. Self was not listened to. She lived for her God, she lived for her husband, she lived for her children, she lived for her friends, but not for self. St Paul says of himself: "I live, no, not I, but Christ liveth in me." So was it in Mrs Galton's soul: our Lord had to a great degree taken the place of self.

Therefore, brethren, that precious gift of love which rendered her life and her death so calm, which enabled her to pass through the "waters

and the fire* in the incorruptibility of a quiet and meek spirit," was the crowning grace won by countless battles with self. She paid the price, without staying to count the cost, and won the pearl beyond price.

14. It will help us to understand better her calm and quiet career if we call to mind the words of the 90th Psalm: "He that dwelleth under the help of the Most High."

You remember, brethren, how our Saviour said to Jerusalem: "How often have I wished to gather you as the hen gathers her chickens under her wings!" The delight of our Father in heaven is to take care of His children. He is in the truest and most perfect sense the best of Fathers. Good fathers and loving mothers here on earth are only faint images of God our Father in heaven. All He begs of us is to live close to him, to allow Him to care for us, and to dwell under the protection of the Most High.

Mrs Galton had the grace to live thus close to her Lord, and therefore throughout the vicissitudes of her life, her winters and her summers, her light and her darkness, she was habitually under the protection of God, and under His wing, saying to the Lord: "Thou art my protection and my refuge. My God, in Thee will I trust." And the answer ever came: "He will overshadow thee with His shoulders, and under His wings thou shalt hope."

15. Therefore the even tranquillity of her life was not the result of apathy. She was not a woman made of wood or lead, with no quick intellectual perceptions, and no strong womanly feelings in her heart. Her intellect was quick and clear. Hers was a well-instructed soul. Her

* Isa. xliii.

heart was the heart of a true wife and good mother.

It would be easy to multiply texts of holy writ which faithfully portray her character.

"Honour and riches," the Proverbs tell us, "are given by parents, but a prudent wife is properly from the Lord."* And again: "A diligent wife is a crown to her husband." The grace of a diligent woman shall delight her husband."† Again: "A courageous wife gladdens her husband and fills her days with peace."‡ Those who knew Mrs Galton well will at once remember how prudent and far-seeing she was, and how it was her habit to look ahead at business that was to be done; and again, how diligent she was, neglecting nothing. In a very remarkable degree she was orderly and methodical. Now, as we know, order and method supposes diligence; even as disorder is commonly the offspring of sloth. If the great calmness of her life had been the outcome of a dull intellect and an insensible heart, her life would have been an idle one; whereas it was full of quiet activity, which lasts, because it is quiet.

Of the mother of the martyred Machabees the inspired historian writes: "This mother was to be admired above measure, and worthy to be remembered by good men, joining a man's heart to a woman's thought," that is, joining the courage of a man's heart to the tender and considerate thoughtfulness of a woman. This was the combination that was so apparent during Mrs Galton's years of widowhood. The courage and strength and good sense of a man was joined with the gentleness and tenderness and considerate circumspection of a good mother.

* Prov. xix. † Prov. xii. ‡ Ecclus xxvi.

She was the "valiant woman."* She was the woman who did not "eat her bread in idleness"; who "looked well to the paths of her house."

16. And now, brethren, before we go to the grave, let me remind you of St Paul's word: *Defunctus adhuc loquitur*—"The silent corpse still speaks." Two words, if we listen with our souls, we shall hear from the coffin. In the first place, as in life Mrs Galton was full of love, and delighted in being a peacemaker, and sharing with others the calm happiness of her own soul; so now her heart is lovingly saying to us, with much charity and much earnestness: "Remember my judgement, for thine also shall be so. Yesterday for me, to-day for thee."† The desire of her heart for all of us is that we may share the grace given to her, and prepare for our coming death by imitating her blameless life and the incorruptibility of her meek and quiet spirit.

And then, in the second place, let me also remind you of a word that our Blessed Saviour spoke in the supper-room, that even he that is "clean wholly, needeth to wash his feet"; that is to say, that even the holy, as they walk through life, gather upon their feet some of the dust of this world, that needs to be cleansed away before they can enter into the eternal home of their Father in heaven. For there neither spot nor wrinkle can find place. Therefore, long before the coming of Jesus Christ, it was revealed to the Jews that "it is a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins,"‡ that is, that those smaller defects which they may carry

* Prov. xxxi. † Ecclus xxxviii. ‡ 2 Mach. xii.

with them out of life may be speedily washed away.

The same revelation passed into the Christian Church. Hence we are all taught to say: "I believe in the communion of saints." I believe that there is a fellowship, a partnership, among all God's children; that the holy servants of God who have gone before us, and those still on earth, are all members of one body; and therefore that there is a continual intercourse between the holy dead and the faithful here on earth. Consequently there is gladness in heaven when the sinner repents, and sorrow among the blessed when a little one is scandalized. So, too, is it one of the great alleviations of the Christian death-bed, and the chief solace of survivors, that the dead are not entirely passed away from us; that they can still befriend us; and that we can still be of the greatest use to them.

Many in this country like to say, as soon as the last breath is drawn on the death-bed: "He is gone to God, gone to a better world"; and with that word the scene closes, and too often the departed one is forgotten—out of sight, out of mind. Is it not much more consoling and much more loving to say: "She was holy, but she may still need some purifying before she enters into the eternal home of her Father in heaven; and therefore she may be crying out to those who so lovingly watched her death-bed: 'Have pity on me, you at least my friends, have pity on me.'" And surely, if it is so great a delight to nurse the dying, and alleviate every pain as much as we can, must it not be a consolation unspeakable, and a holy and [most] wholesome thought to help by our prayers the dead we loved, that the days of her exile may

be made very short, that she may speedily have the desire of her heart?

For if the desire of her heart was, here on earth, "I want to see God," that desire is now intensified beyond measure. "As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so my soul panteth after Thee, O my God. My soul hath thirsted after the strong, living God. When shall I come and appear before the face of God?" *

Eternal rest give unto her, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her. Amen.

* Ps. xli.

Centenary Sermon

Preached at Stonyhurst, July 25, 1894

> And all the people shouted with a great shout, praising the Lord, because the foundations of the temple of the Lord were laid. But many of the priests, and the Levites, and the chief of the fathers and the ancients that had seen the former temple, when they saw the foundation of this temple before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many, shouting for joy, lifted up their voice. So that one could not distinguish the voice of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people.—1 ESDRAS iii.

OBSERVE, my dear brethren, the voice of the shout of joy, and the voice of the weeping of the people, went up to heaven together. So must it ever be in this world. For we hang midway between heaven above and hell beneath, and our earth is a battlefield on which our Lord and His angels meet the princes of darkness to struggle with them for the souls of men. Here, then, on the midway battlefield we sometimes hear some faint sounds of the songs of Sion above. Sometimes, too, we hear echoes of the weeping and wailing of hell below. In heaven there is nothing but joy, in hell nothing but despair. Here on earth the tones of joy and the noise of the wailing blend together. It has ever been so, and ever shall be. At the first Christmas the *Gloria in excelsis* of the angels was speedily followed by the loud lament of the mothers of Bethlehem—"Rachel bewailing her children, and would not be consoled because they were not." * So is it still. We call Christmas a merry time, but in our climate Christmas chimes and the

* Matt. ii.

passing bell are often ringing together in discord. Many are making merry, many more are watching by the death-bed or weeping at the grave.

Brethren, a centenary is no exception to the rule. If it conjures up many happy recollections, so does it bring to life again many forgotten sorrows. If the men who have worked in this college could be gathered together for the celebration, we may feel sure that they would bow down their heads and strike their breasts, and before taking part in joyous merry-making would say with the good King Ezechias: *Recogitabo tibi annos meos in amaritudine animæ meæ.** They would like, if I may so speak, to make the general confession of the college, to deplore all the sins, offences and negligences which disfigured the work of God during the by-gone hundred years. And the holier they were and the better fitted for their work, the more heartfelt would be their sorrow for the commissions and omissions that spoiled, in any degree, the most divine of all divine works—the work of helping our Lord Jesus Christ to take care of the souls of His little ones.

A Retrospect

It would be a great pleasure on an occasion like this to pass in review some of the events which have brightened the hard existence of the downtrodden Catholics in this land, since the day when the great French Revolution so unexpectedly brought back Catholic education and religious freedom into England. Catholic emancipation, and the good fight fought through the dark days by our venerated Bishop Milner, would be welcome topics, and still more so the

* Isa. xxxvii.

return of the second spring with the advent of Cardinal Wiseman, so deservedly remembered as great and good. In the domestic history of the college also it would be a most pleasing task to refresh your memory of the holy career of the good and very remarkable man who was so prominent in welcoming back the returning exiles, and by his marvellous almsgiving bequeathed such large blessing to his family. I allude to the friend in need who was such a friend indeed to the fathers from Liége, whom he sheltered in this house. But on these topics I may be silent. Why so? I am reminded of the sentence which we so often find repeated in Bible chronicles: "Joram slept with his fathers. But the rest of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Words of the days of the Kings of Juda?" So may I say: All these pleasant records, are they not written in the Book of the Words of the days—in the beautiful volume prepared with so much care for this centenary celebration?

My work is rather, as I have said, to awaken some notes of mourning. For if the shout of gladness and the voice of weeping must be together, it is natural and fitting that the mourning come from the sanctuary. It is in the sanctuary that we correct and sober the thoughts of outside. His thoughts perplexed him, the Psalmist writes, "until I go into the sanctuary of God." * And observe that the mournful thoughts of the sanctuary do not crush out gladness, but rather prepare the way for it. "Sacrifice," the Psalmist says, "a sacrifice of justice and hope in the Lord." That is to say, holy contrition leads to hope and peace of mind. Hence it used to be

* Ps. lxxii.

observed when I was a scholar in this college, that on the Confession evenings the recreations were more noisy, because the boys were more light-hearted after they had cleansed their consciences. We may add, too, the words of the Holy Spirit: "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting, for in that we are put in mind of the end of all, and the living thinketh what is to come." *

Observe, I pray you, the reason given, "the living thinketh of what is to come." This celebration will be a worthless pageant unless it brings some gain to the living. We who are living now, we are, during our short working day, of more importance than the dead. The Prophet Baruch suggests this appropriate thought: "Open the eyes and behold, for the dead whose spirit is taken away from their bowels shall not give glory and justice to the Lord, but the soul that is sorrowful for the greatness of the evil she hath done, giveth glory and justice to the Lord." † Therefore, "I will recount to Thee, O Lord, the years gone by in the bitterness of my soul." I will let my thoughts dwell rather on the sins, offences and negligences that may have during the one hundred years disfigured and marred the "most divine of all works."

I give this glorious name to college work, first, because the work of a Catholic college is surely one branch of the work of the sacred ministry, which is the divine work of helping our Lord to save souls. A college is a parish in miniature. The gifts and graces of a zealous and holy priest are what are needed for those that work in a Catholic college.

* Eccles vii. † Eccles ii.

And I may add that as in every parish the children are a most precious portion of the flock, college work is in a special sense a most divine work.

The Catholic Child

THE Catholic child is God's first-fruits, and we remember how, in the Old Law, the Lord jealously required for Himself the first-fruits. "Set aside with you first-fruits to the Lord. Let every one that is willing and hath a ready heart, offer them to the Lord. And, accordingly, all the multitude of the children of Israel offered first-fruits to the Lord with a most ready and devout mind."* But what first-fruits does our Lord yearn for as He yearns for the souls of innocent children? And it is doubtless because Satan knows how precious they are in God's sight that in our days he stirs up his agents on earth to make war incessantly against the souls of children. The King of Syria, we read, gave orders in the battle to two-and-thirty captains of his chariots, saying: "You shall not fight against any, small or great, but against the King of Israel only." Something akin to this is Satan's watchword to his followers now: "You shall fight above all against the souls of baptized children."

What wonder that they make such a struggle for the soul of a baptized child! Think for a little while on the effect produced at the font of baptism. If the thread of life is cut one moment before the water flows and the word of power is spoken, the poor soul goes, we may say, still-born into eternity. It has not the life which alone can find place in heaven. If, on the contrary, it be brought to the font, from the poorest

* Exod. xxxv.

garret and in the meanest rags, and the water is poured and the word of regeneration pronounced, O then, let death come as quickly as it will. "O death, where is thy victory?" This is not death, but the beginning of life. For the holy angels are waiting and saying with glad wonder: "Who is this that cometh up from the desert, flowing with delights?" Without any let or hindrance, without any passage through cleansing fires, it is welcomed among angels and archangels. Nay, brethren, if the outcast workhouse child that died yesterday after baptism were permitted to appear here to-day above the tabernacle, we should fall on our knees and think that for certain we were worshipping the divine Child Jesus, and the little innocent would have to chide us as the angel did St John: "See thou do it not. I am thy fellow-servant and of thy brethren."* What wonder Satan longs to tear the prize away from our Lord, the treasure bought by His Sacred Blood! What wonder the wicked spirits watch wistfully by the cradle for the dawning of reason, that they may begin to work their plot, and rob the soul of faith and innocence before their worth is known!

The Teacher's Vocation

WELL, brethren, they that undertake the work of education, offer themselves to be the guardians of the baptized child; and from His holy cross our Lord Jesus accepts them for this sacred office. Already He has given His angels a command concerning this child. Already He has from His death-bed charged His holy Mother to be a mother to His child. Knowing, too, that this child, as we are reminded by holy Job's

* Apoc. xix.

words, was created in the womb by the same eternal Father who gave Him His human nature in the womb of His blessed Mother, He has without hesitation given all His Blood to win back this lost child for His Father. With a great price indeed this child has been bought. We then present ourselves to take charge for God the Father, for God the Son, for the blessed Mother, of this treasure that was lost and is found, that was dead and has with infinite pains been brought to life. And our Lord accepts us. Yes, He accepts us. But, brethren, we remember the question which He put once, twice, and thrice to St Peter on the shore of the lake: "Simon, lovest thou me?" It was not till He had three times heard the answer: "Thou knowest all things, Lord. Thou knowest that I love Thee," that He gave him his commission: "Feed My sheep, feed My lambs." Has then His love for His sheep and lambs died out or cooled down since that day at Tiberias? Is He not "Jesus, yesterday, to-day, and the same for ever"? Does He wantonly and recklessly commit His little ones to our keeping without having from us some guarantee? Assuredly His solemn question to us is still the same: "Lovest thou Me, when thou comest to undertake this office?" Never can He gladly or willingly commit His little ones to our care till He has from us this assurance: "Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee." "Neither doth any man," St Paul writes, "take the honour to himself, but he that is called by God." Alas! St Paul's meaning is that no man ought to take the honour to himself until called and approved by God.

Some one will object, perchance, and say: "St Paul is speaking of the priestly office."

True, brethren, but the care of Christ's little ones is a most essential part of the priest's office. The priest is appointed to take charge of the Body of the Lord. But the Lord has two Bodies. He has His Body of flesh, and He has His mystical Body. And though it be true that the priest standing at the altar to handle the Sacred Body of the Lord is doing his highest work, yet it is no less true that our Saviour gave away to death His Body made of flesh to save His mystical Body. Now, surely, when a wise and sensible man pays a price to purchase a treasure, the treasure is by him more valued than the price he gives for it. We know that our Saviour has said: "As long as you did it to the least of My little ones you did it to Me."* We know, too, that it is written: "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of My eye." But stronger than all these words is the fact that He sacrificed His Body of flesh and the life-blood of His Heart and gave it away willingly as the price of the souls of His little ones. Therefore, if St Alphonsus on hearing that a priest had died after saying his first Mass, exclaimed: "He has gone out of the world with a heavy responsibility on him"; if to offer up one Mass is a heavy responsibility, can it be a light one to have for years the charge of Christ's little ones—His first-fruits, His proxy, His second Self, the half of His Soul?

He has Himself told us the question that rises in His Heart when one of His redeemed fails to save his soul: "What commutation will you give? What will you give Me in exchange for your immortal soul?" If so, what will His question be to us who undertake to educate, if through our negligence one of these innocent

* Matt. xxv.

souls perish? "What exchange can you give Me for the soul I entrusted to your keeping?"

To this thought we must add another kindred thought:

Solicitude of a Catholic College

In a Catholic college situated in the country, as this is, and as many of our English Catholic colleges are, we undertake the responsibility in its most difficult and dangerous form. For we undertake to be entirely, or nearly so, *in loco parentis*. When a college stands in a town, where the scholars are within a short distance of their home, parents retain their position. The preceptor in the college works hand in hand with the father and mother at home, and the larger share of the responsibility remains always with the father and mother. But in country colleges those who teach and educate have to work single-handed. The home influence can give but little help. The teachers add to their proper burden an obligation to have all that solicitude, that vigilant care, which is the first duty of a Christian parent. St Paul writes that solicitude is the distinguishing grace of those who in the Church of Christ have charge over others. Ecclesiasticus describes a good father watching "for his daughter when no one knoweth, and the care of her taketh away his sleep."* They who undertake to be *in loco parentis* thereby engage to share this solicitude of good parents. Alas! what a perilous office we take upon us! We remember what the prophet said to the wife of Jeroboam: "I am sent to thee with heavy tidings: when thy feet shall be entering the city, thy child shall die." What if tidings much more heavy come to the

* Ecclus xlii.

Christian mother? To-day your child has fallen from innocence and committed his first mortal sin. For how many Christian mothers there have been, and are still, who have with all their hearts prayed the prayer of good Queen Blanche, that death may come to their child before grievous sin. What could the Superior of a college answer to a broken-hearted mother if she asks in sorrow, "What exchange, what commutation can you give me for the innocence of my child? When I entrusted my boy to you, he was a chosen vineyard and all good seed!"

There is, brethren, a prayer that the Psalmist makes, which everyone who devotes himself to Catholic education has great need to make often and most heartily:

Give me, Lord, Goodness and Discipline and Knowledge *

GIVE me goodness, that is, give me true charity. For who is fit to be trusted with the little ones if he has not charity in good measure?

St Paul pictures to us charity in great detail: "Charity is patient, charity is kind. Charity envieth not, dealeth not perversely; is not puffed up; is not ambitious; seeketh not her own; is not provoked to anger; thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things; believeth all things; hopeth all things; endureth all things." What is the apostle doing but drawing for us a portrait of what those ought to be who are entrusted with the care of Christ's little ones?

"Charity is patient; beareth all things; endureth all things; is not provoked to anger." How can a man be put in charge of Christ's little

* Ps. cxviii.

ones unless he has a large share of Christ's patience and meek charity? If in an evil hour he is carried away by anger and punishes too severely and unjustly, that hasty act does not quickly pass away—it abides in the memory of the sufferer; and the preceptor's influence for good is diminished exceedingly; sometimes lost irreparably. True, the scholar may require correction; but to correct is like the surgeon's work of lancing. If the surgeon, instead of nursing the wound gently and waiting for the proper time to lance, were to thrust the knife into the diseased flesh with temper and anger, who would have recourse to such surgery? The Holy Ghost, in the Book of Wisdom (cxii) bids us notice with what circumspection God corrects His children. Most assuredly He expects those who offer themselves as His delegates to guide His little ones, to correct with some share of His circumspection.

Think no Evil and Avoid Tale-bearers

AGAIN, the delegate who is forming God's little ones for heaven, St Paul tells us, "thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth not in iniquity." All who are in charge of others, while full of vigilant solicitude, are to be as unwilling to think evil, and as little glad to believe tale-bearers as men of business are to pay bills. They take good care before they pay to be quite sure they owe the money. And those who are in charge over Christ's little ones ought to require very sure evidence before they believe evil. We are not to rejoice in iniquity. We are not to welcome the tale-bearer, as if he were bringing good news, when he comes to open a foul mouth and pour out his poisoned breath. "The whisperer," the Holy Ghost tells us, "and the double-tongued is accursed; for he

hath troubled many that were at peace. The tongue of a third person hath disquieted many. He that hearkeneth to it shall never have rest. Neither shall he have a friend in whom he may repose."* Every Christian, therefore, and above all he who is placed in charge of others, has need, we may say, of a special angel-guardian to protect him against the hypocritical and plausible malice of double-tongued whisperers. Hence it is that the Psalmist, after asking the question, "Lord, who shall rest on Thy holy hill?"—that is, who shall save his soul—answers: "He that hath not done evil to his neighbour, nor taken up a reproach against his neighbour. In his sight the malignant is brought to nothing."† That is to say, a Christian man who has charity in his heart, who is not glad to hear evil of his neighbour, who will not easily believe evil, is so stern when a whisperer comes to him that the malicious sycophant "is brought to nothing." He is made to feel that he is thoroughly unwelcome. He will be glad to escape, and never will be anxious to return. The Amalecite who thought he would please David by bringing him the tidings of the death of Saul, his great enemy, met with little welcome. He did not live to come again with similar news. He was smitten with the sword and died.

Discipline

WELL, brethren, we are told, too, to pray for the spirit of discipline.

In a college the spirit of discipline is much the same thing as the spirit of obedience. It is well for the pupils and well for the college when those who are looked up to in the school-room as

* Ecclus xxvii. † Ps. xiv.

masters, and called masters, are men trained themselves to cordial obedience, men really under authority, who, when the Superior says go, they go; and when told to do this, they do it. One of the impressions left on my mind since my early days in this college is that the men whom we called our masters were men of discipline—men very reverential and obedient to those placed over them by God.

The spirit of discipline, again, is most necessary to prevent one worker from destroying the good done by another. We know that both in college and outside undisciplined goodness pulls down with one hand as much as it builds up with the other. Even almsgiving, on which our salvation so much depends, if it is unregulated and disorderly, ceases to be the charity of Christ.

No Espionage

AGAIN, brethren, if one who undertakes to take care of Christ's little ones has not the spirit of discipline and solicitude, and indulges in private theories, such for instance, as that vigilance is not needed nor desirable, to what an extent may he jeopardize a college!

It is no part of St Ignatius's theory of education, or of any other good theory, to encourage what the French call espionage, and what we in this country call spying. But those who undertake to act as parents in charge not of a small family, all of one colour, but of a large number of youths, from homes not all equally well regulated, will have a difficult account to render, if they underrate that vigilance which is dictated by charitable solicitude; an honest, overt, and above-board vigilance. For as holy men in all

ages have inculcated the great good of having a companion as a witness of our lives, so is it of the utmost necessity that the young in training should be conscious that they are living in evidence, so that the dangers of youth may be minimized.

I have spoken of the necessity of discouraging tale-bearing and espionage. A much more difficult task is to induce young boys and young men to be manly enough, conscientious enough, and good Christians enough to denounce promptly and unsparingly any stray comer, any wolf in sheep's clothing, who under a fair outside hides a corrupt heart, and is labouring stealthily to spread infection.

Knowledge

"GIVE me knowledge." Lastly, brethren, we are told to pray for knowledge. And in such a country as this, where we are surrounded by hostile education, an education that is godless, surely our Catholic teaching should be on the level with the best. We are putting the loyalty of Catholics to a very severe test indeed if, while we denounce heretical education, we offer nothing as good in exchange.

The Watchword of a Catholic College

ST IGNATIUS was raised up at a time when learning was made the handmaid of heresy. The new religion in this country went by the name of the new learning; and he was quick to perceive that the heroism of Catholics was not to be manifested entirely, or even chiefly, on the scaffold, but in the school-room. Nothing shows the store he set upon learning as a weapon for God's glory and the salvation of men better than the fact that

he sacrifices prayer and devotion so largely in order to be sure that laborious study be not hindered. "*Esto in omnibus operibus tuis præcellens*—In all thy works keep the precedence." *

This is a counsel given to us by the Holy Ghost. It should be the watchword of all Catholic colleges.

Every Catholic man who rises to eminence is, in a very true sense, an apostle. He teaches us a love of labour and industry, and to conquer difficulties, and to abhor idleness, which is the prolific parent of sin, even as diligent work is a safeguard of innocence. It is a calamity for a college and for the pupils when any branch of knowledge whatever, even among the accessories, is badly taught and studied without zest. No matter what the art or science may be, a youth who is conquering difficulties, and learning to work carefully and with accuracy, is being most usefully trained. On the other hand, no matter what the art or science be, if a youth is being badly taught, and works listlessly, he is learning indolence, and learning to be contented with mediocrity; perchance with much less than mediocrity. And the habit that is being thus formed is diametrically opposed to the inculcation of the Holy Spirit: "In all thy works keep the precedence."

The work to be done in a Catholic college is, then, a sacred work and a divine work. And if those who have taken part in it during the last hundred years could meet together at a celebration like this, they would acknowledge fully the wisdom of Baruch's words: "The soul that is sorrowful for the greatness of the evil she hath done, and goeth bowed down and feeble, giveth glory and justice to Thee, O Lord." † We under-

* Eccles. xxxiii. † Bar. ii.

took a high work, a sacred work, a divine work, and, looking back on our performance, what can we say but that too often we did not do well or wisely the divine work that we undertook? It is through "the mercy of the Lord that we are not consumed.* To us, O Lord, belongeth confusion of face, but to Thee, the Lord our God, mercy and forgiveness."†

School-day Impressions and Love of Our Lady

My brethren, in conclusion, there is one other thought that tempers very much the joy of those who are called to the divine work of saving Christ's little ones. It is this, that do what they may during school-days, their work must end abruptly. St John Francis Regis loved to work for the dying, because the good done to them seemed more secure. But when youths leave college in our days, often too soon, and find on every side of them a corrupt literature, a presumptuous revolt against authority and all safeguards, and a fashion which proclaims that to be strong-minded we must be unbelieving; it is clear that the good done in college, especially when youths are obliged to leave without any knowledge of mental philosophy, must be in a position like that of a very frail vessel exposed to a very stormy sea.

There is, however, this drop of comfort: that it is thoroughly proved by experience that first impressions are deep impressions; and even when they seem to fade away entirely in the heyday of life, they come back with the sere leaf. An hour of trouble arrives when the prodigal turns to the home of childhood. We are told that the Swiss peasants are willing enough to

* Lam. iii. † Dan. ix.

spend their manhood abroad in far countries; but, as the evening of life comes on, if they chance to hear the Ranz des Vaches which they used to listen to in childhood on the mountain-side, they are seized with an irrepressible longing to go back to their châlets. So it is often with a Catholic man, brought up well in his childhood. We read that in the hospitals of France the dying soldier, apparently hopelessly hardened, has oftentimes had his heart softened when the Sisters of Charity spoke of the day of his First Communion. There is one day and one hour in my college life which I look back to with a special contentment; and I believe that the feeling has been shared by very many who pass through Stonyhurst. I speak of the great Festival of our Lady, when in the early winter morning, after our three days of retreat, we were led to the altar in the old Sodality Chapel to make our solemn covenant with the Mother of God: "I choose thee here this day for my Lady, my Queen and my Advocate; I pledge myself never to say or to do anything to thy dishonour; and never to permit any one under my charge to dishonour thee. I humbly beseech thee, therefore, in return, to stand by me in all the actions of my life, and not to forsake me in the hour of my death."

Such an hour as this, brethren, is likely to come back in old age. And what better blessing can I now wish you than that, whether in college or outside, you may spend your days under such a covenant with our Blessed Lady, and may all find her protection through the changes of this changing world; may all have her watching over your coming in and your going out, now and for ever; and, above everything else, may find her watching by your last struggle, as she watched by the death-bed of the Good Thief on Calvary?

Centenary Sermon

Preached at the Convent of the Holy Sepulchre, New Hall, July 5, 1898

I will wash my hands among the innocent, and I will compass Thy altar, O Lord ; that I may hear the voice of praise, and tell of all Thy wondrous works. I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thy house, and the place where Thy glory dwelleth.—PSALM XXV.

ONE hundred years, then, dear Sisters, have gone by since this old palace of a king whose name is not at all in benediction among us, was changed into a convent of the Holy Sepulchre. The Gospel words have been reversed : its last state is not worse than the first, but very much better.

During these one hundred years, many ladies from the different Catholic families which had escaped the wrecking and the ruin of the last three centuries, bent their footsteps to New Hall, to consecrate themselves as nuns of the Holy Sepulchre.

St Bernard, as you know, dear Sisters, used from time to time to say to himself at Clairvaux : "Bernard, Bernard, why camest thou hither?" If we might now put this question to the Catholic ladies who come to live and die at New Hall, I think their answer would be found in the words that I have cited from the 25th Psalm : (1) I came to wash my hands among the innocent; (2) I came to compass Thy altar, O Lord ; (3) I came that I might hear the voice of praise, and tell of all Thy wondrous works ; (4) I have

loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thy house, and the place where Thy glory dwelleth.

Let us for a little while consider this their answer.

1. I have come to wash my hands among the innocent. There are those, as you know, dear Sisters, who if they come into a country, or into the Church, or into a town, or into a family home, wherever they make their appearance, they come in thanking God with the Pharisee that they are not like the rest of men; not like the rest of vulgar Catholics, or the narrow-minded nuns. They are born to reform: they come to make all things new.

The ladies who were drawn by the Spirit of God to the Holy Sepulchre had better thoughts.

I want to wash my hands, their hearts were saying; I wish to cleanse my soul from all the stains that in my early days have sullied my works, my words, my thoughts: *Amplius lava me*, was the cry of their souls to God.

In order to become more quickly one of Christ's blessed ones, the clean of heart who shall see God, I will go and wash my hands among the innocent. For innocence and holiness are contagious, even as vice is. I will go and hide myself among the innocent, to live and die among the innocent, that their example and their prayers may help me to become like them innocent of hands and clean of heart.*

In a convent of contemplatives, dear Sisters, there is not as much scope for the practice of the works of mercy in all their variety as there is in the life of an active Order. For this reason, the outside world has sometimes stigmatized the contemplative life as idleness. But the Holy

* Ps. xxiii.

Spirit tells us that these unwise censors will at the Judgement-seat change their mind and say: "These are they whom we had some time in derision, and for a parable of reproach. We fools esteemed their life as madness, and their end without honour. Behold how they are numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints."*

Yes, they are numbered among the children of God for two reasons.

First, because they were merciful; they did not neglect the works of mercy. The sacred Body of our Lord in the tomb is a picture of the contemplative life of the Holy Sepulchre. The Body is shut up in the silent tomb, with the seals upon the door; but the Soul of our Saviour is free, busy with His work of love and mercy. He loved to the end, St John writes; and when He died at the ninth hour, His blessed Soul went on at once with His work of loving and almsgiving. He is changing limbo into a paradise. He is carrying the fruits of Redemption to the imprisoned souls who have been so long afflicted with hope delayed; so long, so long pouring out their earnest prayer: "May the heavens rain down the Just, and may the earth bud forth the Saviour."† Even so, the cloistered and consecrated virgin seems to be imprisoned in the convent, but her soul can range to the ends of the earth, wherever there is a sufferer in need of help; yes, and can travel beyond the confines of this world, to the prison-house where the holy dead, out of sight, and, too often, out of mind, are meekly and patiently sighing out their prayer: "Have pity on me, have pity on me, you at least my friends."‡

* Wisd. v. † Isa. xlv. ‡ Job xix.

And this special life of mercy, this apostleship of prayer, so excellent, and so much wanted in the Church, is better carried on in the cloister than elsewhere. "Thou art poured out like water," the Patriarch said to his first-born son, "grow thou not."* Oftentimes, when we wander abroad, we become dissipated; we are poured out like water, we grow not in holiness and fervour. We cannot pray for those in want with that vivid faith, those burning desires that are needed to draw down abundant graces from heaven. Hence it is that Jeremias makes his lament: "With desolation is all the land made desolate, because there is none that considereth in the heart."†

And on the other hand, "From the beginning of thy prayers," St Gabriel said to David, "the word came forth, and I am come to show it to thee, because thou art a man of desires."‡

It is when the body is shut up in the Holy Sepulchre, and all the senses are closed to this world, that the contemplative soul most easily forms those burning desires which have so much power in heaven.

Therefore the cloistered nuns are numbered among the children of God, because their life abounds in good works of mercy.

The other reason why it fares so well with them at the Judgement-seat, is that they are clean of heart, and therefore are entitled to see God. The life of mercy in the cloister has this advantage over the apostleship of the active life, that it is more sheltered from temptations, and therefore lends itself more to cleanness of heart. I came therefore to the Holy Sepulchre, the departed mothers and sisters say to us, to wash

* Gen. xlix. † Jerem. xii, 11. ‡ Dan. x, 23.

my hands among the innocent; but I had also another attraction.

2. I came also to compass Thy altar, O Lord; to go round about Thy altar, O Lord; to spend my life, and then lie down to die under the same roof with my Lord in the tabernacle. We are told that the heliotrope during the day ever turns its face towards the sun. And even so, the mother and the sister consecrated in the convent of the Holy Sepulchre—whether she is in her cell, or in the garden, or in the community-room, or in the kitchen, or the infirmary, or the school-room—wherever she is, she spends her day going in spirit round Thy altar, O Lord. Her heart is ever turned to Thee. When in the early morning she falls on her knees at rising, her eyes and her heart at once look towards the Blessed Sacrament, and her cry is, *Deus, Deus meus, ad te de luce vigilo.** If the Jews could say of old: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand be forgotten; let my tongue cleave to my jaws if I do not remember thee; if I make not Jerusalem the beginning of my joy": † what wonder that Christian ladies bid a long farewell to the loved home of their childhood, to hasten to the convent of the Holy Sepulchre, to spend their days going round about Thy lovely altar, O Lord, and to have their deathbed spread beside Thy tabernacle, and their quiet grave dug for them under the shadow of Thy holy house. For "better is one day in Thy courts above thousands. I have chosen to be a castaway in the house of my God." ‡

3. I came, then, to New Hall to wash my hands among the innocent; and I came to compass Thy altar, O Lord. But there was still

* Ps. lxii. † Ps. cxxxvi. ‡ Ps. lxxxii.

another attraction. I came too to hear the voice of praise.

My heart was strongly drawn to the sacred psalmody of the Divine Office. I wished to hear the songs of Sion, and take part with the blessed in their heavenly anthems.

It is within the sacred precincts of the cloister that the Divine Office is made a labour of love. In the busy life outside it may become a task, a burdensome duty that seems to stand in the way of urgent business, and is therefore stowed away into the odd corners of our working day. "Before prayer," the inspired writer counsels us, "prepare thy soul." * In the contemplative life not only is ample time allowed for the leisurely discharge of this sacred duty, but there is also time and opportunity to prepare the soul to join with the heavenly choirs in the sacred psalmody.

When the Jews were asked by their masters in Babylon to sing some of their Hebrew melodies, they answered: "How can we sing the songs of Sion in a strange land?" † Alas, at a distance from our heavenly home, in this strange land of banishment, how can we properly and becomingly sing the songs of Sion? When the children of God here on earth are taking up their books to recite the holy Psalms, their brethren already in heaven, and the holy angels, and the Blessed Mother of God, come round them, inviting them to do their work heartily. "Come, let us praise the Lord with joy, let us sing joyfully to God our Saviour.‡ Come in before His presence with exceeding great joy." § But alas! Only the clean of heart (can) see God with this vivid faith, and

* Ecclus xviii. † Ps. cxxxvi. ‡ Ps. xciv.
§ Ps. xcix.

come into His temple, not in body only but in spirit, "singing," as St Paul writes, "and making melody in their hearts to the Lord."*

It needs time and preparation to come thus prepared and with a clean heart to join the songs of the blessed with gladness exceeding great.

Like the manna from heaven, the Divine Office has for fervent souls "all that is delicious, and the sweetness of every taste."† But alas! in those not clean of heart, and whose souls are not prepared for prayer, like the manna it loses all its sweetness and provokes a nausea.

4. I came then to New Hall, the blessed dead say to us, to hear the voice of praise; and not only the praise of God, but the praise too of man, God's image.

For in the world outside I seldom could hear either praise for God or praise for man, God's image and His child. Wherever I bend my steps, it was as if man had been created to blame, and not to praise. The hours of silence were few and short; the hours for talk were long and many, and what were the daily and hourly familiar topics—oh, too familiar by far?

They were two. First, the hearts of men were enslaved, as the Wise Man writes, by the "bewitching of trifling";‡ and therefore the tongue, which ever speaks out of the abundance of the heart, the restless tongue discoursed without tiring of the trifles, of the day-dreams of this world of illusions.

And secondly, the only change in this monotonous music, so wearisome to our God in heaven, was when this restless tongue, the untamed evil, as St James calls it, "the world of iniquity,"

* Ephes. v. † Wisd. xvi. ‡ Wisd. iv.

began its oft-repeated whisperings concerning the faults and shortcomings, the sins, the astounding iniquities of the helpless absent, who could not speak in their own defence.

Oh, whither can I fly to escape from the virulent poison of the malicious tongue? Where can I go to hear the voice of praise?

St James, dear Sisters, puts this question to us: "Doth a fountain send forth out of the same hole sweet and bitter water?" Can we with the same tongue bless God and the Father, and curse men who are made after the likeness of God?* Can we blame and calumniate and revile God's children outside the Church door, and then pretend to praise God heartily within? This cannot be.

"He that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he," St John asks, "love God whom he seeth not?" † Therefore, as I want to take part in the praises of my God, oh, let me hide myself where I shall not be compelled to listen to the murmurs and slanders and whisperings of the restless tongue.

5. And there was yet another charm drawing me to the Holy Sepulchre. I want to tell of all the wondrous works of God.

From the gatherings of His own children in the outside world, God our Father, God our Redeemer, is too often banished. As we say now-a-days, He is boycotted. It is a sin against good taste and good manners to speak of God and His wonderful works. The man who in our company intrudes church talk, the world says, "is grievous unto us to behold; he is a censurer of our thoughts. He boasteth that he hath the knowledge of God: his life is not like other

* Jas. iii. † 1 John iv.

men's: his ways are very different: we are esteemed by him as triflers."*

Alas! we are told that our happy life in heaven will consist in knowing God our Father and Him whom He sent, Christ Jesus. Our eternal life will be made up of companionship with our God, thinking of Him for ever, talking of Him and to Him for ever. Is there no corner in this wide world where I can begin the occupation that is to be the delight of my eternity?

I will go then and wash my hands among the innocent, and compass Thy altar, O Lord; that I may hear the voice of praise and tell of all Thy wonderful works.

And so life passes at New Hall, and oftentimes a long life, as we measure time in this world.

But at last the summons is heard in the middle of the night: "Behold the Bridegroom cometh: go ye forth to meet Him."† In the middle of the night the whisper comes: "Give an account of thy stewardship, for now thou canst be steward no longer." ‡ Go forth, Christian soul. "For man must go into the house of his eternity." §

So now, at last, as Ecclesiastes writes, now, must "the silver cord (of life) be broken. The golden fillet of fresh health and gracefulness and earthly beauty must shrink back, the pitcher that holds the life-blood must be crushed at the fountain, and the wheel of her nativity must be broken upon the cistern. The body made of dust must be carried to the cemetery, there to return into its earth from whence it was, and the spirit go back to God who gave it." ‖

* Wisd. ii. † Matt. xxvi. ‡ Luke xvi, 2.
§ Eccles. xii. ‖ Eccles. xii.

Meanwhile, as the wise virgin, whose lamp has not gone out, lies on her death-bed awaiting the supreme moment, Holy Church is pleading for her: "She may have sinned, O Lord, but she has always firmly believed in the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and has had a true zeal for Thy honour."

In that hour of awful suspense, the true nun of the Holy Sepulchre can say in her heart: "I have loved the beauty of Thy house, O Lord, and the place where Thy glory dwelleth."

For I have loved Thy Church, O Lord; and Thy Church is Thy house. I have loved Thy militant Church, I have loved Thy suffering Church. Every triumph of Thy Church was my joy—all her sorrows were sorrows of mine.

And I have loved Thy House, O Lord. For I have loved my convent; and my convent, too, was Thy House. I witnessed, with gladness of heart, the innocence, the fervour, the heavenly charity which adorned the community. I was in partnership with all Thy devoted servants, O Lord.

Yes! and I loved the beauty of Thy House, O Lord; for I loved our little chapel, and our choir, and the holy sanctuary. It was my heart's desire that the anthem round the altar should ever be, as St Thomas of Aquin desired, "full and loud and sweet and most becoming"—*Sit laus plena, sit sonora, sit jucunda, sit decora, mentis jubilatio;* and the desire of my heart was that everything that was best should be for the sanctuary.

And, O my God, I have loved the beauty of Thy House, because I have ever loved Thy holy Mother, Thy House of Gold. She led me to the Holy Sepulchre, she has been with me through

the changes of my changing life. May she stay with me even to the end, to the very end, in the hour of my death.

And our Blessed Saviour comes Himself with the response; comes to make His consecrated Spouse His Sepulchre; comes to lay His own sacred Body within the well-prepared resting-place—her clean heart. And ere the last breath is drawn, He whispers to her soul, "Thou shalt be with Me in paradise."

She is dead. "Her place is in peace, her abode in Sion."*

As a postscript, dear Sisters, I may be permitted, for personal reasons, to invoke a special blessing on all and each of the community gathered here to-day. My personal reason is this, that, indirectly at least, I am connected with New Hall longer than most of those taking part in this celebration. One hundred years ago the convent was founded, and not far short of a hundred years ago there came to the school at New Hall a young girl, who was afterwards my mother, and laboured, with only indifferent success, to teach me some of the good principles she had learned here. And her appreciation of the wise and holy training of New Hall she proved by sending a long line of daughters to share the graces she valued so much.

The blessings, then, which I wish to each of the religious are found in the 120th Psalm. May each of you have grace to lift your hearts and your eyes to the mountains whence help shall come to you; to the sacred mountains, Mount Sion and Mount Olivet, Mount Moriah and Mount Calvary.

"May He that keepeth watch over the Holy

* Ps. lxxv.

Sepulchre never slumber and never sleep. May the sun not burn thee by day, nor the moon by night. May the Lord guard thy coming in and thy going out now and for ever."

Thy coming in and going out—that, whenever you enter the choir, you may come in with a blessing and go out with a better; that as often as you approach the holy table, you may have much grace coming, and more going away; that as often as you enter the confessional, you may go in with much contrition, and come out more and more clean of heart; that as often as you go to the class-room, or your assigned employment, every word and work of yours may begin always with God, and by God be happily ended; that at night you may lie down to rest in God's keeping, and in the morning at His call rise up in gladness, as the stars, of which Baruch tells us: "They were called, and they said: Here we are; and with cheerfulness they have shined forth to Him that made them."*

Nothing now remains but to join our prayers during the holy sacrifice, that all of us here present may die the death of the just ones who have gone before us from New Hall; and that the coming hundred years may be more happy, more blessed, more holy than the years gone by.

* Bar. iii.

ART AND BOOK
CO., PRINTERS,
LEAMINGTON.

252.4
G138

61157

Gallwey, Peter

AUTHOR

Salvage from the Wreck.

TITLE

DATE DUE	BORROWER'S NAME
	STORAGE - CBPL

61157